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THE STORY

OF

JESUS CHRIST THE SAVIOUR

RETOLD FROM THE EVANGELISTS.

BY

MRS. S. WATSON.

With Maps and over 100 Engravings.

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PREFACE.

THE aim of this volume is to present the narrative of the Four Gospels in a compact and consecutive form, with so much of illustrative detail and occasional comment as may make the earthly life of the Saviour a deeper reality to the reader.

Elaborate criticism is beyond the scope of the work, although the endeavor has been to embody the latest results of biblical study. The few exegetical comments that appeared necessary have been placed in the notes; and the Chronological Summary at the end of the volume sufficiently explains the arrangement adopted. No complete or final 'Harmony of the Gospels' appears possible. Still, apart from controverted details, the main outline of the narrative becomes increasingly clear to careful students; while every new attempt to arrange the whole in order makes yet more manifest a Divine purpose in the distinctness as well as in the unity of the Evangelists.

The great truths and principles which lie at the heart of the Divine story, and especially the redeeming purpose of the 'Word made Flesh,' are rather pre-

supposed than formally discussed. Faithful narration, not theological exposition, is the purpose of this work. The Great Biography contains its own lesson, which the reverent and thoughtful reader cannot miss.

Everywhere the illustrations are subordinate to the text. Maps and landscape views are from the best authorities. Among the few figure pieces may be especially noted some copies of Mr. Tinworth's remarkable terra-cotta panels, introduced by kind permission of Messrs. Doulton. The frontispiece is taken from one of the most recent and precious additions to the Dresden Gallery.

The writer has had especially in view the needs of thoughtful young men and women, of Sunday-school and Bible-class teachers, and of the more advanced pupils in schools and families. Many of these, it is believed, will value such a recasting of familiar words, and will find anew, in that study of the Divine Life to which a narrative like the present can be but an introduction, not only the secret of personal salvation, but the remedy for the world's ills, the uplifting of the standard of human conduct towards the Divine ideal—in a word, the true and perfect revelation of God, *to*, *for* and *in* man. 'Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' (Hebrews i. 3, R. V.)

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THE STORY

OF

JESUS CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR.

CHAPTER I.

THE LAND AND ITS STORY.

NO country has ever been the object of such passionate longing, such rapture of appropriation, such patriotic devotion, as the little tract of highlands lying on the west of Asia. When the children of Israel, after their weary wanderings in the peninsula of Sinai, reached this Land of Promise, whither their eyes and the eyes of their fathers who fell in the wilderness had long been turned, they possessed it with an ardor of hope fulfilled which was strengthened by their consciousness of being a 'peculiar people,' chosen of God, and sent thither to work out a Divine ideal.

And in contrast with the bare and sultry countries of the East, Palestine was a fair and goodly region,

fulfilling Moses' description of 'a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths springing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of oil olives and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness."[1] It is a small country; in length only about 180 miles, and rarely more than 50 miles broad; but within its narrow compass the climate varies from temperate coolness to tropical heat, and the trees and plants of Northern Europe flourish not many leagues away from the palms and oleanders of the sunny South. The whole country is one region of uplands and hills, cleft only by the deep chasm of the rushing Jordan from north to south, and by the great plain of Esdraelon from east to west. This mass of mountains and high valleys rises sheer out of a level tract of desert on the east and south, and from a flat coast on the west, while on the north the heights of Lebanon and Mount Hermon leave but a narrow passage for its approach. So was the ancient dweller in Palestine guarded from the outer world—by treeless, arid wastes of sand, mountain sentinels, and a straight, inhospitable coast line with scarcely a bay or haven to encourage intercourse with the children of the West.

The modern visitor to the Holy Land sees only the wreck and desolation of much of the beauty that flourished in the time of our Lord. Woods then clothed the mountain sides; terraces on the steep hill-slopes supported soil that was richly cultivated; vineyards and cornfields spread in smiling luxuriance where now

[1] Deut. viii. 7-9.

bare tracks extend. The widespread destruction of trees and vegetation has done much to alter the climate, lessening the rainfall, and hence causing the brooks to flow with far less copious torrents than of yore. Ruins on almost every hill-top mark the place where in the time of Jesus some flourishing village existed, with its cultivated terraces descending like broad steps into the valley; the Mount of Olives is almost barren; desolate and bare are even the once beautiful shores of Gennesareth. Yet the whole country is full of sacred memories, and the thoughts of Christians will always tenderly hover round

> Those holy fields,
> Over whose acres trod the blessed feet
> Which, eighteen hundred years ago, were nailed,
> For our advantage, to the bitter cross.

In the time of our Lord, Palestine was divided into three provinces, as distinct almost as though they had been separate countries, in spite of their small area. GALILEE, in the north, the scene of the greater part of His labors, was by far the most beautiful. Here softly rising hills, waving with palm and cypress, fig and olive trees, shut in green and flowery valleys, while the northern district rose into mountainous grandeur, and Carmel and Tabor graced the southern plain. The Lake of Galilee, lying in a deep basin, embosomed in hills, was the centre of busy activity, as well as a spot of choice loveliness; white sails skimmed in all directions over its waters, and its shores swarmed with life. Grassy slopes, thick with flowers, crept from the foot of the mountains to the sweet blue waters; here and

there a sheet of fine dazzling sand, sown with tiny shells, bordered the lake; and the Plain of Gennesareth, on its western border, smiled like a very 'garden of the Lord.' The historian Josephus, who knew and loved Galilee, said: 'It is a fertile land and full of meadows, where trees of every kind grow; and promises through its luxuriant fruitfulness a rich reward even to the most miserable husbandry.' [1]

JUDÆA, in the south, was less picturesque. Rounded hills, crowned by villages with terraced vineyards descending their slopes, broad valleys diversified with cornfields, orchards, and a well here and there, made up the chief characteristics of its somewhat monotonous scenery. But, though it was the least beautiful, it was the most glorious of the three provinces to every Jewish heart; for there Jerusalem, the 'City of the Great King,' sat enthroned on her height, with the deep ravines of Kedron and Hinnom sweeping below her proud walls.

SAMARIA, which separated Galilee and Judæa, was an unfriendly country, inhabited by a mixed and alien race. Seven hundred years ago it had been colonized by heathen,[2] who had intermarried with the Jews, and had vainly sought to unite with them as one nation. Their refusal had created a feeling of bitter enmity; and at the time of our Lord the animosity was so strong that pilgrims from the north sometimes avoided Samaria in going to Jerusalem, taking the route on the eastern side of the Jordan. This alien tract of country, lying between the northern and southern

[1] *Wars of the Jews*, III. iii. 2.

[2] 2 Kings xvii. 24.

provinces, made Galilee comparatively isolated, and shut it off, as we shall see hereafter, from much of the influence that reigned in Judæa.

Such was the country that was to have the deathless honor of being the birthplace of Jesus Christ. When He came, the palmy days of the Jewish nation had long since passed away, for its history during the last five or six centuries had been the history of successive invasions. Persians, Greeks, Syrians had in turn possessed the land, and although the courageous patriot Judas Maccabæus had prevailed against the impious Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, his efforts to free the country had availed but for a little while. For when a dispute arose between two of his descendants, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, for the high-priesthood and sovereignty, they foolishly invoked the aid of the Roman general Pompey, who, in the year B.C. 63, made Judæa tributary to the Romans.

Thus, like all the rest of the known world at the time, Palestine was under the Roman yoke. The universal dominion of Rome secured universal peace—'a calm which through centuries continued to lave, as with the quiet undulations of summer lakes, the sacred footsteps of the Cæsarean throne.' All the world was one vast empire; men of all tribes and nations bowed in awe before one monarch. This unique condition of things was fitted in the highest degree for the advent of One with a universal message of mercy and love.

Outwardly the condition of Palestine seemed prosperous enough. Herod, surnamed the Great, an Idumean, and consequently regarded by the Jews as an

alien, occupied the throne through the favor of his imperial master, the Emperor Augustus (Octavius Cæsar). A strong, shrewd, unscrupulous man, Herod inwardly hated and despised his Jewish subjects, but sought, from motives of policy, to conciliate them by enriching their land with new and splendid buildings. Fresh cities arose, one of which, named Cæsarea in honor of the Emperor, vied in the splendor of its quays and public buildings with the architecture of the West; gorgeous palaces were erected at Tiberias, Cæsarea, Jerusalem and Jericho; while a Temple of untold richness and beauty was in progress at Jerusalem under the direction of the king who scorned the faith it embodied. But the Jews cared nothing for this insincere homage to their religion — these architectural splendors and half-heathen new cities. Repeated invasions, instead of assimilating them to their conquerors, had only made them more hostile than ever to foreign influence, and they clung forlornly to their ideal of being a chosen, separate nation—loathing the symbols of the power they were compelled to obey. In compliance with the wise Roman custom, their religion was respected, but at every turn they could not fail to encounter tokens of the detested yoke. The very coins they used were Roman, and, as such, unfit in their estimation to be cast into the Temple treasury; they must needs be replaced by the old Jewish silver half-shekel, which it was the function of the 'money-changers' to provide. The tribute Herod paid to Augustus was levied from the unwilling people in a great many forms by the tax-collectors and custom-

house officers, called 'publicans' in the New Testament. These 'publicans' were a constant source of irritation to the Jews, who regarded them with hatred and contempt, as traitors to their nation. The very magnificence of Herod's royalty was also an offence to his subjects, for he was not of the house and lineage of David, and was himself a slave to Rome. Hence the Roman yoke, though not harshly enforced, was deeply hated.

Prophet and seer had long been dumb, and the religion of the Jews had become barren and withered. By 'the Law' was understood every precept given by lawgiver, prophet, or teacher that related to life, and a vast accumulation of tradition had clustered round the original Divine commands. This mass of infinite detail it was the work of the order called 'Scribes,' or 'Rabbis,' to interpret, and it was considered a sin to infringe one of their countless vexatious precepts. Hence the common people lived under a system of priestly tyranny that governed their food, their dress, their every act at home and abroad; religion was fast becoming an affair of outward form alone, and the precious inward life was forgotten and neglected. Nothing is more noticeable in the life of Christ than the power and sternness with which He attacked this false, tyrannical religion, and showed how widely apart it was from the love and worship of the Father.

Thus the Jewish political ideal was crushed perforce by the foreign yoke; the religious ideal was dragged down by priestcraft. Yet the nation had had a glorious past, and in the hearts of the people hopes and pre-

sentiments were stirring. Had not a Messiah been promised of old? Surely the time was near when He should appear, defeat their conquerors, and raise them up to a height surpassing all their former greatness. Little did they understand what they hoped for; their Messiah was indeed at hand, but when He came the Cross was their reward to Him whom Pilate mockingly styled 'the King of the Jews.'

CHAPTER II.

THE FULNESS OF TIME.

THE Messiah had been promised of old; and yet Jesus of Nazareth was unrecognized, persecuted, and crucified by the means of those religious leaders of the people whose business it was most closely to study the prophecy and song that foretold His advent. Was there then so great a discrepancy between the foreshadowing and the reality? Let us linger for awhile over this Jewish hope of the Messiah, or the Christ, for both words, the former Hebrew, the latter Greek, signify alike 'the Anointed One.'

The traveller in Alpine regions, while resting on some hard-won mountain slope, will often let his eye wander over the leagues of the vale beneath. Far away, into the still, hazy blue of the air, stretches the valley. Its white villages, at first distinct, grow small and well-nigh imperceptible, until, as the distance from the spectator increases, they flash only here and there in the glint of a falling sunbeam. Into the blue vagueness of distance merge meadows and forests alike,

until the eye vainly strives to discern the exact features of the winding way between the hills. Yet there is something in the scene that links together the distant and the near. Far away from its source among the clouds, in the ice-world of the glacier, comes a torrent that threads the vale with a line of light; and however far the eye can penetrate, the stream is beyond. Now and then it is lost to sight in some inequality of the landscape, but it always reappears, gathering fresh strength and volume from the brooks that feed its waters. For this torrent is one of the reasons for the valley's existence. White, rushing, alive, it fertilizes the pastures on its banks, gives life and beauty to the whole that it binds into one, and never pauses in its course until it rests in its goal, the still lake beneath the everlasting hills.

So do those, who from a modern standpoint look over the expanse of Jewish history, discern a line of light, like the stream in the Alpine valley. It brings freshness and life in its course, increases in its onward progress, gives unity to what would otherwise be severed, binds together the distant and the near, until it finds its end in the 'fulness of the time.' Such is the Jewish hope of the Messiah.

And this hope, too, has a distant and a heavenly source; for in the Book of Genesis the story of the Fall of Man is bound up with the promise of a Redeemer.

As history advances the prophecy becomes more distinct, and each stage of development is marked by a clearer apprehension of the hope to come. Thrice

was the promise given to Abraham, 'In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' [1] It was repeated to Isaac,[2] and renewed once again to Jacob.[3] Then came the wonderful story of the band of slaves called out of Egypt, taught and trained by long and weary wandering, until they became a great nation, dwelling in the pleasant hills and valleys of Palestine.

With all their history the hope of the Messiah—the Regent of God upon the earth—is interwoven. For the very idea of the establishment of the Jewish system was to symbolize the kingdom of God among men.[4] Everything in this kingdom was sacred; the daily duties of life were regulated by God's law, and worship was loyalty to the unseen King. True, the idea was sadly marred in the working out; but the very faults and flaws created a more earnest desire after the accomplishment of the ideal.

Balaam, heathen seer though he was, gave unwilling witness to the coming Messiah before the hosts of the children of Israel on the plains of Moab. Six centuries later, when a special family, out of a tribe already set apart, was chosen as that of the king, the expectation of the nation became fixed upon that family. The 'Son of David' was one day to rule in peace and splendor, and many of the Psalms shadow forth the glories of His reign.

The national horizon soon became overcast by clouds. King after king proved tyrannical and idolatrous, faith-

[1] Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii 18.
[2] Gen. xxvi. 4.
[3] Ib. xxviii. 14.
[4] Ex. xix. 5.

less to the God of Israel, cruel to His people. In these times of national apostasy and sin God was never left without witness, and the voice of His prophets mingled with sterner warnings the promise of One who should rule in righteousness instead of oppression, and be the comforter instead of the tyrant of His people. The darkness around threw up in clearer relief the radiance of this promise, and the longing eyes of many weary souls turned to the vision of One who should be 'as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land'—a King who should rule in equity—who should not turn away from the cry of the poor and needy—who should restore, and far exceed, all the splendors of the reign of David.[1] This was the hope of the loyal and patriotic Jew.

The Captivity still further enlarged the idea of the Messiah. Hitherto the Jews in their own land had dreamed only of a national sovereign, 'Son of David,' who should undo the harm wrought by his predecessors and outvie their glory. Now the prophet Daniel, in a far country, had the larger vision vouchsafed to him of the 'Son of Man,' who should represent not only the Jewish nation, but the whole of redeemed humanity. In his magnificent words, 'There was given to Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.' [2]

[1] Is. ix. 2–7; xi. 1–10; xii.; xvi. 5; xxxii. 1–8; xl.
[2] Dan. vii. 14.

The bondage to alien nations in which the Jews were held increased this hope until it became an intense passion. And it was not wonderful that as one figure after another became prominent on the stage of Jewish history, Messianic expectations were quickened. Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Simon Maccabæus, each in his turn awakened the hope that he might be, if not the Messiah, at least His forerunner; for the character of a hero and deliverer was the most popular type for the One who should come. Yet the conception varied according to the different minds that entertained it. There is a wide diversity in early Jewish literature as to the nature and functions of the Messiah, although the Apocrypha, the Talmud, the Targums[1] abound in details on the subject. The doctrines of his sufferings and violent death, as suggested by Isaiah liii., are not omitted, but the comments are obscure, and often conflicting. Certainly no clear idea of a Christ dying for the sins of mankind ever prevailed before His advent, and out of a number of varying images the popular mind seized the most gratifying and cheering—that of a divinely endowed national champion. Meanwhile the Rabbis, or teachers of the law, made the coming of the Messiah the central point of their doctrine. All were agreed that He was to be born at Bethlehem, of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David. Elijah was to reappear and anoint him. Then He was to free Israel

[1] Side by side with the written law of the Pentateuch, it was supposed that a mass of oral explanations had been given by God to Moses. These formed the Talmud. The Targums were commentaries on the Old Testament.

from the power of Rome, and form a kingdom of unrivalled power and strength. Prosperity was to be universal and extraordinary. The descriptions of the fruits of the earth, the splendors of Jerusalem, under the Messianic reign, read like childish exaggeration, yet they were received and believed.

That He would be the Son of God was implicitly held by many, as is shown by the high priest's question: 'Tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God?' Others, again, pictured Him as a human champion, who would lead them to victorious conflict with the Roman arms. All agreed in one thing, that He was to raise Israel to a height of splendor unknown before.

Everything was ready for His coming; in some mysterious way expectation was quickened; the world was quiet under the universal sway of Rome. And a humble village maiden, betrothed to a carpenter, was sitting in an obscure country village, when to her there came a heavenly message of wonderful import. Her Son was to be the long-expected Deliverer; and His name was to be Jesus, for He should save His people from their sins.

From their sins?—nay, rather, from the Roman yoke, from poverty, from national degradation! Such were the calamities from which the Messiah was to free His people, according to the prevalent idea. Freedom from sin had scarcely entered into the conception. Yet Mary, without doubt or questioning, accepted the description of the Christ, and the words in which she greets her kinswoman Elisabeth, the future mother of

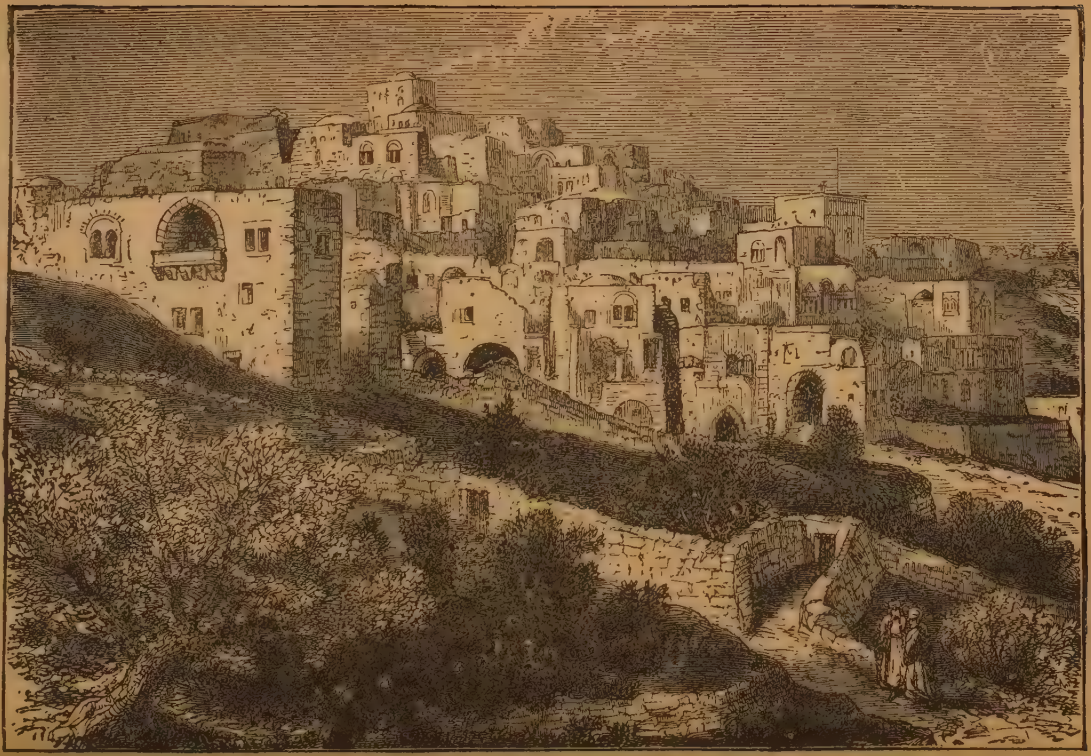
John the Baptist, are full of poetic beauty and fervor:—

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour;
For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden;
For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
For He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is His name.
And His mercy is on them that fear Him, from generation to generation.
He hath shewed strength with His arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty, from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.
He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.
He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;
As He spake to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.

The contrast between the human expectation of Christ and its fulfilment sets forth His mission in full clearness.

Instead of coming in outward pomp and glory, He came in poverty and obscurity. Instead of warlike achievements over the enemies of Israel, His conquests were over the far more terrible enemies of humanity, physical disease and moral guilt. Character, in His teaching, was everything; outward distinction nothing. All His life He attacked shams of every kind—hypocrisy, sanctimoniousness, and pride—insisting that before everything the man himself must be good and pure, however imposing his appearance before men or his religious observances might be. This was all strange and irritating to the Rabbis, and so widely unlike the Messiah that they had been expecting that

they never dreamed of identifying Jesus as the Christ. Here and there, as we shall see, a pure and humble heart owned him as Lord; but few indeed could rise to so spiritual a conception as that of a Messiah whose victory was to be over sin and death alone, and who should hold national renown as of little account in comparison with purity, goodness and truth.



BETHLEHEM.

CHAPTER III.

BETHLEHEM.

FOUR years before the reputed date of the birth of Jesus, a few shepherds were gathered one wintry night in the plain below the long, narrow hill whose summit was crested by the village of Bethlehem. They were guarding their flocks from wolves and robbers, perchance by the flickering light of a watch fire, and not far away an old tower called 'Migdol Eder,' or 'Tower of the Flock,' spoke mutely of bygone days when the patriarch Jacob had tended his sheep under its shadow and watched from its summit against the foe. The whole neighborhood was rich in historical memories. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, lay buried not far from the gates of Bethlehem; Ruth had gleaned among the reapers in the cornfields that gave the place its name, 'House of Bread'; in the very fields where the shepherds were tending their flocks, David, the Shepherd King, had kept his father's sheep; and above them, on the rocky ridge, still stood the well for whose water he longed when warfare and trouble had chased away all his peaceful days.

While some of the shepherds slept, others were probably talking in a low voice together. The weather, even supposing it to have been mid-winter, was not necessarily as cold as the same period would be in England, for after the heavy rains in November the flowers blossom and shepherds lead out their flocks to the pastures. Overhead the solemn dome of the sky was bright with the wonderful radiance of an Eastern night; perfect stillness brooded over the hills and valleys. It was a time when earnest men would be likely to speak of the hopes that were near their hearts, and to express more than they would have dared to utter in the broad light of day. The life which the shepherds led in that wild, hilly country, where they had constant need of bravery, watchfulness and tenderness on behalf of their flocks, as well as long, quiet periods for musing, helped to make them a fine race of men—strong, hardy and intelligent. Therefore these watchers in the plain doubtless knew all about the hopes and fears that throbbed in the heart of their nation; and it is very likely that they spoke one to another of the Messiah that was longed for with so much intensity. Was it not foretold by one of their own prophets that He should come out of this same Bethlehem that crowned the narrow hill? Nay, was not the very 'Tower of the Flock' that cast its shadow in the starlight yonder strangely connected with Messianic prophecies?[1] The time and the place, therefore, were fitted for the expression of such hopes; and there was another reason why they should recur just now with

[1] Micah iv. 8; v. 2.

redoubled force. The Emperor Augustus had ordered a census to be made, for the purpose of taxation, all through his empire; and, according to the Jewish custom, each inhabitant had to go to the home of his ancestors, there to enrol his name, taking at the same time an oath of allegiance both to the hated Idumean king and to the Roman emperor.

The task must have been a very galling one, especially to those who had to leave their homes for a wintry journey to their ancestral district. Although we may suppose the greater part of the population were registered in the place where they dwelt, Bethlehem was crowded with those who, being of the house and lineage of David, had travelled to enrol their names in the former home of their royal ancestor; and doubtless many a heart in the little town longed for the coming of Him whom the sweet singer of Israel shadowed forth. Then all this unwilling submission, this lip allegiance with rage in the heart, should be exchanged for joyful loyalty to the Messianic King.

He was near; but not in the shape they dreamed. While the shepherds were sitting there in the quiet and the darkness, St. Luke tells us that a strange light, as of the brightness of the sun, shone round about them; and at the same moment a form, not of this world, but with an unearthly radiance and beauty, was at their side. Terrified and amazed, they knew not what to do; but the angel spoke to them in gentle tones, saying, 'Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour,

which is Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you: ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.'

As the angel finished his message, the heavens flashed into brightness with a multitude of the heavenly host, and these words sounded on the ears of the enraptured listeners:—

> Glory to God in the highest,
> And on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased.

The angels' song was heard by no one but the shepherds, and very soon the vision died away; the heavens above and the plain below were dark and silent as before. But in the hearts of the listeners all was changed. They were full of amazement, joy, bewilderment; and their first thought was to obey the message of the angels by hastening to Bethlehem. Through the fields, up the terraced slopes of the hill, through the moonlit gardens they hurried, till they reached the summit of the ridge and entered the narrow village street. Where should they find the object of their search in the sleep and the silence of night? They went first to the village inn, or 'khan,' which had a hanging lamp in the doorway to guide travellers, and which in all probability, like those still existing in Palestine, offered only the roughest accommodation. Upon a square enclosure where cattle were tethered opened low arched recesses, devoid of any furniture, and not even shut in by a front wall, with a floor raised a foot or two above the courtyard. In these bare compartments the traveller must lie upon his own carpet,

cook his own food, and live in public. It must, however, be remembered that hospitality was considered so sacred a virtue among the Jews that inns in our modern sense were scarcely needed; any passing stranger could claim from an unknown host entertainment and lodging, which were cheerfully granted as a duty, and inns only became necessary, therefore, when private houses were full to overflowing. Such was the case now; and among the throng of sleeping travellers in the caravanserai the shepherds failed to find the Babe they sought.

There was a stable connected with the khan, to receive animals for whom there might not be space in the courtyard. Very probably this was a mere cave in the limestone rock, for these grottoes abound in the limestone formation of the hill country of Palestine, and are still used as stables at Bethlehem. However this may be, we know that in the humblest and meanest of shelters the shepherds found Mary and Joseph, who had come to register their names at the home of their ancestor David.[1] And here lay He whom they sought—a newborn babe, cradled in a manger.

Jesus came to teach men that outward pomp and grandeur are of no importance compared to righteousness within the heart. Therefore He chose this lowly birthplace with only a few poor shepherds to worship

[1] Matthew, the Hebrew, writing for Hebrews, traces the legal succession of Jesus through a line of kings to the throne of David; while Luke, the Greek, writing for Greeks, traces His natural kindred with men and human sonship to God. The word 'son' in Jewish genealogies does not mean the actual child in every case, but the descendant. If these facts be borne in mind, the agreements and differences of the two pedigrees are easily understood.

Him, and a village maiden for His mother, whose husband was a plain Galilean peasant.

We do not know what act of reverence the shepherds rendered to the new-born Saviour, but we know that they told all who stood by of the heavenly message they had received. The listeners were amazed; but Mary 'kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart. The wondrous story did not take her unawares, for she, too, had received an angel's embassy; yet scarcely during His lifetime did she grasp the fact that her Son was indeed the world's Redeemer.

The shepherds did not let the night's marvellous experience cause them to forget their ordinary duties, and, with praise and gladness in their hearts, they returned to their flocks. True, they could not tell how the helpless Babe in His rough resting-place was to be the 'Saviour,' the 'Anointed One,' but they believed the heavenly vision. Their lives in all probability were ended or far spent when our Lord's public ministry began; but we may be sure that they never forgot the revelation, and died in faith that the consolation of Israel was at hand.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DIVINE INFANCY.

AS Mary and Joseph remained in Bethlehem for some weeks, they doubtless soon left their humble shelter and found a more comfortable home. On the eighth day after His birth the Babe received the Jewish rite of circumcision and was called by the name JESUS, which is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Jehoshua (shortened into Joshua or Jeshua[1]), meaning 'the salvation of Jehovah.' St. Matthew gives us the reason of the name: 'It is He that shall save His people from their sins.'

Every Jew loved and honored the name of Joshua, for it had been borne by the leader under whom his ancestors entered the Promised Land. And now it was to belong to a far greater Leader, who should guide men, not into an earthly Canaan, but into another and a better country.

As Jesus was a first-born son, His parents were com-

[1] For various instances of the name, see Num. xiii. 8; 1 Sam. vi. 14; 2 Kings xxiii. 8; 1 Chron. xxiv. 11; Luke iii. 29; Acts xiii. 6; Col. iv. 11.

pelled, according to Jewish law, to redeem Him, after thirty-one days had elapsed, from the necessity of service in the Temple. In memory of the deliverance from Egypt long ago, God had claimed the first-born sons from every family to minister to Him, but afterwards He accepted the tribe of Levi in their place;[1] and in token of the substitution five shekels (about twelve shillings) were paid to the priest. It was not necessary that the parents should appear in the Temple for this object, but there was a second rite that claimed their attendance in the sacred precincts—the presentation of the usual sin-offering and burnt-offering on the mother's recovery.[2] Although this could be done by a representative, all mothers who could personally attend in the Temple would naturally do so, and Mary would deem herself happy to be able to combine both the redemption of her Son and her own sacrifice. Solemn rites these were to every Jewish mother; and doubly solemn to her who had some faint appreciation of the vast issues involved in the birth of her Son.

The mother's sacrifice consisted, in ordinary cases, of a lamb for a burnt-offering and a dove for a sin-offering; but where these formed too costly a gift, she was allowed to bring instead two turtles (doves) or two young pigeons.[3] It is touching to see that the mother of Jesus bore the humbler offering.

[1] Exod. xiii. 13–15; Num. iii. 11, 12; viii. 16–18; xviii. 15, 16.

[2] The appointed time for this 'purification' was forty-one days after the birth of a son, eighty-one days after that of a daughter.

[3] Lev. xii. 8. These birds are so plentiful in the Holy Land that their value is very small.

One morning, then, when the Babe was about six weeks old, Mary and Joseph took the two hours' journey from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, carrying with them their modest gift. The road they traversed with the Child ran along the hill-side until it came into full view of the magnificent city, enthroned on its stately height with marble palaces and fortresses overlooking the valley of Hinnom. The travellers wound round to the 'Gennath' gate, near the palace of Herod, and, entering Jerusalem, made their way through the streets and over the bridge that spanned the ravine of the Tyropœon, to the glorious Temple. It was probably before nine o'clock when Mary reached the Court of the Women, for custom obliged her to appear as soon as the nine blasts of the Temple trumpets had called to morning prayer at the 'third hour.'

While the parents were waiting to present their Infant before God and to pay the redemption money, an aged man drew near, Simeon by name.[1] We know little about him, save that he was just and devout, and 'waiting for the consolation of Israel.'[2] It had been revealed to him that he should not die without seeing the desire of his heart, and under the influence of this hope he had come to-day to the Temple. Long and weary must the waiting-time have seemed to this good old man; but he was

[1] Attempts have been made to identify him with the Rabbi Simeon, son of the great Rabbi Hillel and father of Gamaliel. But that Simeon did not become President of Jerusalem till A. D. 13 (seventeen years later), and St. Luke would not have called him 'a man in Jerusalem' only.

[2] 'May I see the consolation of Israel!' was a very common formula among the Jews.

richly rewarded, for in some wonderful, still way God pointed out to him the Saviour he sought.

Simeon went up to the two country-people and took the little One, without apology or preface, into his arms. The beautiful hymn of rejoicing that broke from his lips has for eighteen centuries been dear to Christians, and forms part of the daily evening service of thousands: [1]—

> Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord,
> According to Thy word, in peace;
> For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
> Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;
> A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
> And the glory of Thy people Israel.

The prophecy that the Saviour should be a revelation to the Gentiles as well as the glory of Israel may have added to the surprise His parents felt at the greeting from Simeon. The Gentiles—by whom are meant all people outside the pale of the Jewish nation—were not included, a Jew would have thought, in the promise of the Messiah; and in later days the apostles themselves found it hard to realize that God's salvation was for all, and not for a chosen few.

Turning to Mary and Joseph, Simeon blessed them, and then told the mother, whose heart was beating high with sacred hope and joy, that 'the Child was set for the falling and rising up of many in Israel.' Many who were proud and obstinate should fall through their rejection of Him, from their outward greatness; while others should rise, by His help, to the realization of an

[1] It is called the 'Nunc Dimittis,' from the (Latin) words with which it begins.

ideal hitherto undreamed of. Much enmity should be aroused by His Gospel, and she, the pure, gentle mother, should be called upon to suffer keen anguish for His sake. This was the first bitter drop in Mary's cup of gladness; yet we may well imagine, in the joy caused by this testimony to her Son's Divine mission, all future grief seemed easy to bear.

Once again the infant Jesus was to be greeted with rejoicing. Anna, an aged woman, who had been a widow fifty or sixty years[1] and had served God constantly in religious services in the Temple, drew near as Simeon finished speaking. She caught the strain of his words, and joined in thanksgiving to God that the promise of the Messiah was now to be fulfilled. The short remainder of her earthly life was gladdened by this radiant hope, and though, probably, she was regarded as a mere enthusiast, she sought to impart it to others in Jerusalem. So, to these two simple souls, with natures pure and earnest, unspoiled by the popular formal religion, was the truth vouchsafed that their priestly leaders failed to see.

Mary and Joseph, with hearts full of solemn happiness at what they had heard, returned to Bethlehem. It appears that Joseph intended to remain here for some time. Perhaps the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the wonderful things the parents had been told by the shepherds, Simeon, and Anna, made Joseph and Mary both think it well that He should be brought up

[1] The expression in Luke ii. 36, according to the best reading, seems to mean: 'she had been a widow *up to the age of* 84,' although the Revised Version gives, '*she had been a widow for*' that period.

in the spot where His ancestor David had lived, and whence it was expected by the whole Jewish nation that the Deliverer should come. But if it was their intention to give up their home in Nazareth altogether, they were prevented from fulfilling it by the events which followed.

Soon after the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, a strange little company of visitors appeared in Jerusalem. They were 'Magi,' or members of the learned priestly caste from Persia, Babylonia, or Arabia, who had journeyed from their native land on purpose to make an inquiry that startled all who heard it: 'Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we saw His star in the east,[1] and are come to worship Him.'

The brief account given by St. Matthew of this visit prevents our full understanding of the circumstances. But we know that great numbers of Jews were dispersed over various parts of the East, through whom the Oriental nations would gain some knowledge of the hope of a coming Messiah.

The Magi were astrologers, and in their nightly study of the heavens they had discovered what made them believe that the long-expected event had happened.[1] It is quite unnecessary to believe that a new star was

[1] That is, we, in the east, saw His 'star.' The 'star' would be west of the gazers, if it indicated the place of the birth of Christ.

[1] It has been calculated by the great astronomer Kepler that a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, in Pisces, took place three times in the year A. U. C. 747, and that Mars joined them in the spring of A.U.C. 748, two years before our Lord's birth. This would arouse the attention of Chaldæan observers, and, as the constellation Pisces was supposed to be connected with the fortunes of Judæa, the conjunction

created on purpose to guide them. Rather were they induced to interpret some appearance in the heavens—it may have been a meteor or a conjunction of stars—as a sign to lead them to Jesus. Accordingly a few of their number took gifts with them, and departed for Judæa. So the words of Simeon found their first fulfilment, and 'Gentiles' came to worship the new-born King.

The inquiry of the Magi caused much excitement through the whole of Jerusalem, and most of all King Herod was affected by the tidings of their visit. He was at this time in miserable health; his life of unhallowed success and savage cruelty was ending in an unhappy, jealous old age, spent in his gorgeous palace on Mount Zion. He knew his subjects longed for his death, and as he had usurped the throne,[1] he was especially furious to hear of some One who, unlike himself, was *born* 'King of the Jews.' Accordingly he summoned a meeting of the Sanhedrin,[2] and questioned

might be interpreted by them as a sign of some coming event in that country. It is significant that Herod inquired diligently of the wise men what time the star appeared, and then ordered the slaughter of children up to the age of *two years*, which would be the exact period since the conjunction of 748 took place. See Dean Alford's *New Testament* and Farrar's *Life of Christ*. The connection of this phenomenon with the visit of the Magi is, however, to say the least, doubtful.

[1] His mother was an Arabian and his father an Idumean. When, by the Roman support, he seized the throne more than thirty years before (A.U.C. 717), the Sanhedrin told him that the command of God, in Deut. xvii. 15, forbade them to accept an alien for their king. In revenge for this he slew many of their number. Jos. *Antiquities*, xiv. 9; xv. i. etc.

[2] The Sanhedrin (from the Greek *συνέδριον*, a council chamber) was

them concerning the expected birthplace of the Messiah, which, had he been a Jew, he would have known as a matter of course. They answered him from the prophecy in Micah v. 2, that He was to spring from Bethlehem in Judæa. Thither Herod sent the Magi, hypocritically bidding them find out the Child, and bring back word to him, that he too might go and worship the new-born King. Still beholding 'with exceeding great joy' the star that they had seen in the east, they went to the little mountain village, where their strange aspect must have caused great surprise, and, finding out the lowly home of the infant Jesus, they presented to Him with reverence the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh[1] that they had brought from their far-off land.

A vision warned the Magi not to return to the wicked king, who was only waiting for their information to seize the Child and kill Him, so they departed home without again passing through Jerusalem. Perhaps the news of their visit may have brought some

the supreme council of the Jewish nation. It had its origin in the seventy elders whom Moses associated with him (Num. xi. 16, 17) in governing the Israelites; and although that was a temporary tribunal during the wanderings in the wilderness, the number of the members of the Sanhedrin was still seventy-one. It consisted of chief priests (heads of the twenty four classes into which the priests were divided), elders (men of the people, of age and experience), and 'scribes' (lawyers, or those proficient in the law). Its judicial and administrative powers were very great, although it lost the power of inflicting capital punishment forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem. *See* John xviii. 31.

[1] These were the usual offerings on a visit to a king. *See* Ps. lxxii. 10, 15. It has been often remarked, however, that the gifts, perhaps unconsciously to the Magi, symbolized His character and work:—'gold as to a king, frankincense as to God, myrrh as to a sufferer.'

comfort to their friends afar, little as they could yet understand the meaning of the Saviour's mission. For in heathen lands there was at this time a dim longing and unrest. The old false religions were breaking down, and men's souls were thirsting, even though they knew it not, for some message from God.

If, as is very probable, the Magi told Joseph of Herod's injunction to them concerning the Infant, it would at once arouse his alarm. All Jews knew the cruel, crafty nature of their king only too well, and Joseph would see his intention through the veil of pretended anxiety to do honor to the young Child. A dream that warned him to flee with Mary and the Babe into Egypt confirmed his suspicions, and they accordingly departed at once; the gold they had just received affording, perhaps, the means for the unexpected journey. For Joseph was a craftsman; he had doubtless brought the tools of his trade to Bethlehem with him, or had engaged in other work there, and he could ill spare money and time for travelling further.

Egypt was the natural refuge for all who wished to escape from Palestine, for it was near, was much inhabited by Jews, and was out of Herod's jurisdiction. Bethlehem was on the way thither from Jerusalem, and the travellers had about sixty miles to journey before they crossed the narrow desert valley down which, in winter, flows

> The brook that parts
> Egypt from Syrian ground. [1]

Legends abound respecting the wonders that attended

[1] Milton, *Paradise Lost.*

the infant Jesus in His flight and refuge, but we have no certain information how long he stayed in exile, excepting that it must have been at least six weeks; for Herod spent the last forty days of his life near Jericho, whither he had not gone when the fugitives left Bethlehem, and it was not until after his death that they returned.

When Herod found the Magi had disobeyed him he was frantic with rage, and the order that he gave is only in accordance with his ferocious character. He commanded that all the boy-babies under two years of age in Bethlehem and the neighborhood should be put to death, that he might be sure of killing the Infant who was called 'King of the Jews' among the number.[1] Soldiers were sent at once to carry out the horrible decree, and so great was the grief it caused that, in a poetic figure, it was said to fulfil the lament uttered long ago over her exiled children by Rachel, who now lay sleeping outside the gates of Bethlehem. Surely Mary must have felt that for the second time an echo was given to Simeon's words, and her soul was pierced with the first prick of anguish.

Very soon after the massacre of the infants a painful and terrible disease put an end to the tyrant's life.

[1] No mention is made of this slaughter by Josephus, nor is it likely that the historian would concern himself with the massacre of a few infants—probably not more than twenty—in a mountain village, among the darker deeds that attended the reign of Herod. But he asserts respecting the tyrant that 'a dark choler seized on him, maddening him against all,' and the revolting order is just such a one as would be consistent with the mad thirst for blood that marked his latter days.

His deathbed must have been haunted by the memories of murder, for many members even of his own family had fallen victims to his cruelty. The Emperor Augustus had said about him, 'It is better to be Herod's pig (ὗν) than his son (υἱόν).' He had caused his brother-in-law, the young and noble high priest, Aristobulus, to be drowned as a savage joke in one of the baths in the palace of Jericho before his eyes. And yet Herod had been a youth of learning and promise; but, having once indulged in cruelty, the taste grew from more to more, until his old age was literally steeped in murder. He knew that his subjects would rejoice at his death, and grimly resolved that their exultation should be changed into mourning in spite of themselves; accordingly, summoning the chief men of the kingdom to Jericho, he gave an order that they should be craftily shut up in their place of assembly, and murdered as soon as he died.[1] Thus, devising treachery and bloodshed in his last moments, the guilty tyrant passed away.

Herod's dominions were no longer united under one king. He left a will, the last of many successive testaments, under which Archelaus, his eldest son, by a Samaritan wife, Malthake, succeeded as ethnarch[2] to the

[1] The order was not executed.

[2] 'Ethnarch' means ruler of a tribe or nation; 'tetrarch,' ruler of a fourth part. The latter title was at this time applied to petty princes without any exact meaning, although possibly the dominions of Herod Antipas and Philip were regarded as each constituting a fourth part of their father's kingdom. When Herod Antipas is called 'king' (Matt. xiv. 9; Mark vi. 14, etc.) the title is used loosely; he had no real right to it.

government of Judæa, Idumea, and Samaria; Herod Antipas, a younger brother of Archelaus, became tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa; while Philip,[1] a third son of Herod, by Cleopatra, was tetrarch of 'Iturea and the region of Trachonitis.'

[1] This is the Philip of Luke iii. 1, and must be carefully distinguished from his half-brother of the same name (Mark vi. 17) who married Herodias. See table on p. 159.

NAZARETH.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

THE news of Herod's death spread quickly to Egypt, and Joseph returned into Judæa with Mary and her Child; but here a terrible story was upon the lips of everyone, and men looked at each other with horror and anguish. Seven days after the tyrant's funeral a great disturbance had arisen at Jerusalem, which was crowded with pilgrims coming to keep the Passover. One of Herod's latest acts had been to condemn Judas and Matthias, two well-known Rabbis who rebelled against his rule, to be burnt alive. The people, exasperated by this murder and by the long reign of idolatrous cruelty, demanded redress from Archelaus for the wrongs that his father had done. Some of their petitions he granted, but the clamor grew louder and louder, excited throngs gathered at the palace gates, and at last, in despair of stilling the tumult by fair means, he sent out his guards into the streets of Jerusalem. Three thousand Jews were slain in the fight that ensued between the soldiers and the maddened mob.

Judæa was no place just then for any who wished for a tranquil life; and Joseph and Mary gave up the idea of settling at Bethlehem, which must have been a sad and desolate village since the babies were murdered. Warned by a dream, they returned to their former home in Galilee, which was under the milder rule of Herod Antipas. He was an indolent and worthless prince, but was far less dreaded than his elder brother.

So the Galilean husband and wife travelled northwards with their precious charge, anxious, after these months of wandering, to find rest at last in the familiar village of Nazareth. Crossing the fertile plain of Esdraelon, they would direct their steps towards a cleft in the hills that form its northern boundary. Entering this natural gateway, we may imagine them ascending to the left-hand side by a steep and narrow pathway; below them the gorge gradually widens until it becomes nearly a quarter of a mile broad. At last the valley expands into a small amphitheatre of hills, and there, on the sunny south-western slope, the little white town of Nazareth nestles. An old writer has said, 'Nazareth is a rose, and, like a rose, has the same rounded form, enclosed by mountains as the flower by its leaves.' The comparison is a good one, for no less than fifteen hills rise in gently swelling heights around the peaceful hollow on whose side the village clings. In spring the valley is gay with the loveliest flowers, such as the wild geraniums, pink convolvulus, white and pink cyclamen, tulip and various kinds of orchids; the fields are covered with dense rich grass, affording bountiful pasture; birds fill the air with song, or dart, with bril-

liant plumage, among the white and scarlet blossoms of orange and pomegranate trees. From the crest of the hill above the village, the view is varied and extensive. Westward in the distance the prospect is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea, with Carmel on its shore; in the south-east the dome-like summit of Tabor rises from the plain of Esdraelon; far in the north the snows of Hermon gleam against the sky.

Such was the early home of Jesus, far away from the busy world; a little nest among the wild Galilean highlands. Often must the Boy have climbed the mountain behind His home and sat with full heart amid the beauty of nature. We read often in His later life of His love for the solitude of the hills; and surely He acquired this fondness very early in His sequestered home. Here, on these lonely heights, His spirit could commune best with the Infinite Love that is revealed even to the humblest of mortals who is taken into Nature's sanctuary. And if our childhood has been awed into unspeakable rapture and solemnity by the consciousness of the Presence

> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,

how much deeper must have been the significance of Nature to the pure spirit of the growing Son of God!

We know very little of His childhood. The writers of the 'Apocryphal Gospels' have delighted to imagine wonderful incidents of the boy-life of our Lord. They say that He performed miracles in His play-time,

moulding clay sparrows and making them fly by clapping His hands, carrying water in His garment, and astonishing all His companions, who strewed their clothes on the ground for Him to sit upon, while they called Him King and did Him homage. All these stories are improbable, and some of them are mischievous. It is far better to think of Jesus in the natural, sheltered, peaceful life of happy childhood, not asking for or attracting notice, save that which was won by His peaceful goodness. Child-life should always be like that of Jesus, a preparation—a time of quiet waiting.

Joseph was a carpenter, and it is probable that Jesus was trained to help him in his workshop. Every youth among the Jews was taught some trade that might be useful to him in after life; so, even had our Lord not been of humble birth, He would have learnt some such handicraft.[1] We may picture the quiet village home; the square house of white stone, with vines and fig-trees framing it in green; the carpenter's shop, with unsawn trunks piled by the door: the simple living room, where a floor of spotless cleanliness is strewn by a few brightly colored mats, and large red clay water-jars stand beside the door; a lamp hangs from the ceiling, and in yonder recess stands a large painted wooden chest, containing the most treasured possessions of the family. Mary spends her days, like other women of the time, in spinning, cookery, and household tasks; she often goes to draw water from the brook that

[1] Of Hillel and Shammai, the celebrated teachers among the Jews, we read that one was a woodcutter and the other a carpenter. St. Paul also was a tent-maker.

A CARPENTER'S SHOP IN NAZARETH.

ripples down the valley.[1] By her side other children play as time goes on,[2] but no one is like her eldest Son, who never, by word or look, grieves His mother. Those must have been happy days for Mary when she lived with Jesus in the sweet mountain village, and she must often have pondered over the future which she could not as yet understand.

In Jewish homes the love of parents to children, and the love, mingled with reverence, of children to parents, was intensely strong. Honor to parents, in the Divine command, stood second only to the honor due to God; and children were welcomed as the choicest gift from His hand. There are many signs in the later teaching of Jesus that His early home was a very happy one, rich in the tenderness and affection that make the name of father and mother sacred, and the memory of child-life a delight. Like other Jewish homes, it was a school of religion, for parents were expected to teach the Law and passages from the rest of the Scriptures to their children from a very early age, and to tell them repeatedly the thrilling stories of the great men of old which made up the glorious past of the nation. Hence Jesus would often hear of Moses, Samuel, and His ancestor David, as children listen now to the delightful tales of the Old Testament. Perhaps he went to school, for in most of the towns and villages one was found, where the teacher

[1] This is still called the Virgin's Fountain, although the pool whence Mary drew water is now defaced, and turned into a few muddy, broken channels.

[2] See note on the brothers of our Lord, p. 61.

was the reader in the synagogue; and so this life went on, in the uneventful, happy occupations of His age.

When He was about ten years old a great change took place in the Jewish world outside the secluded valley where He lived. Archelaus was accused by a deputation of his chief subjects before the Roman emperor of tyranny and misgovernment, and was banished in consequence to Vienne, in Gaul, while his place was taken by a Roman governor, under the title of Procurator.[1] This did not satisfy the Jews, who had hoped that when the tyrant was banished they might in Judæa revert to their ancient form of government, with the High Priests and the Rabbis at the head of affairs, and the pro-consul of Syria[2] as their nominal lord. But now, with the Procurator as immediate ruler, the pro-consul over him, and the Emperor supreme, they were obliged to confess that they had 'no king but Cæsar,'[3] and the sceptre, in the words of the prophecy, had departed from Judah.

Very soon after this change a great revolt broke out in the land, headed by an enthusiast named Judas. His watchword was, 'We have no Lord or Master but God,' and with a numerous following he proclaimed war against Rome. Mountain-lands seemed to favor the growth of a brave, free spirit; and Galilee, highland district as it may be called, was the chief scene of the insurrection. The boy Jesus, as he trod the

[1] Coponius, a Roman knight, was the first who held this office.

[2] P. Sulpicius Quirinus, the Cyrenius of Luke ii. 2, was now in office.

[3] John xix. 12, 15.

hill-top above His home, must have beheld tokens of the conflict that was wasting the land; but it was suppressed before long, and Judas was slain.[1] Still the air was full of flying rumors of unrest and fierce discontent which reached Nazareth in spite of its secluded

HEAD OF EMPEROR TIBERIUS. (*Enlarged from a Coin.*)

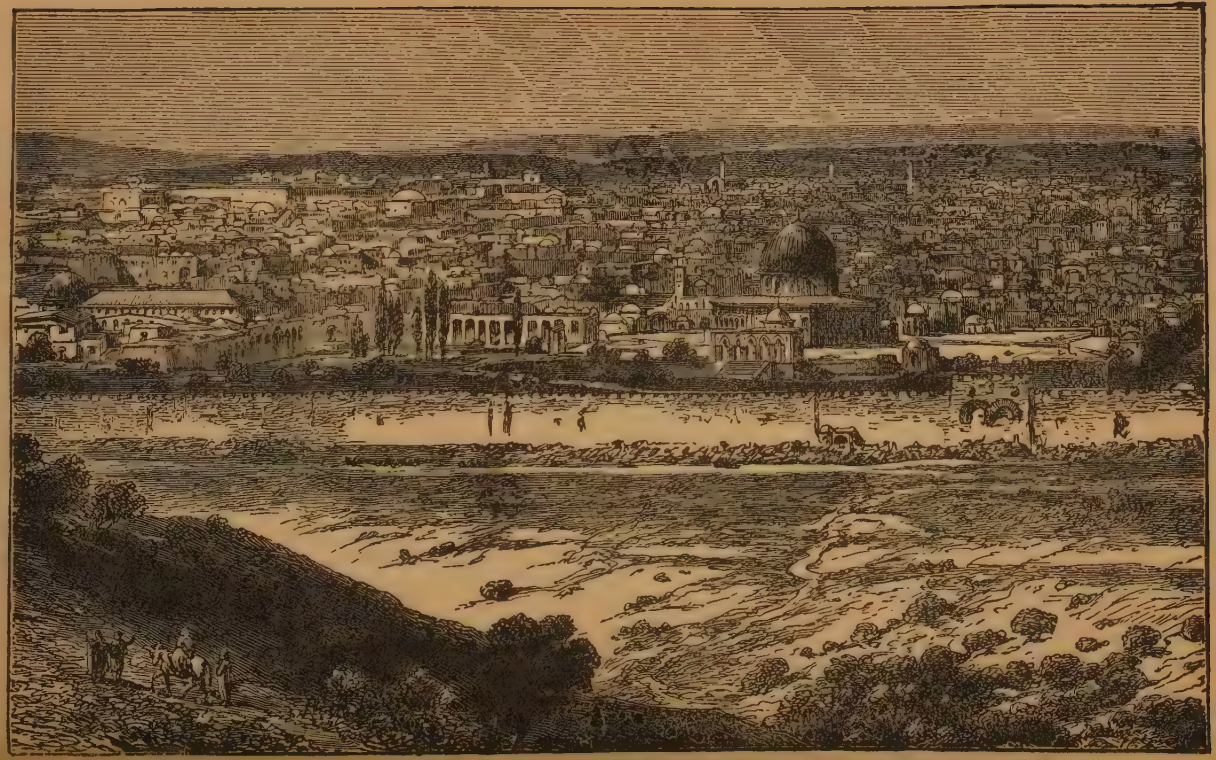
position; for Sepphoris, the capital of Galilee, was only distant three hours' journey, and the great high road from Damascus to Ptolemais, called by the prophet Isaiah 'the way of the sea,' ran along the

[1] See the reference of Gamaliel to this uprising, in Acts v. 37.

plain behind the hill-circle in which Nazareth was built, while other caravan tracks passed to the south of the mountain cleft that formed its approach. Therefore tidings of what was going on in the country of Palestine and in Rome would be brought now and again to the quiet valley.

In the sweet sunshine of the home, with the darker shadows of national unrest and unhappiness falling from time to time across the scene, passed away the early years of Jesus, of which we have merely this record, that He 'waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.' He 'sanctified childhood by passing through it,'[1] and though we cannot understand the mystery, we know that His words His pleasures, His sorrows were those fitted to His age, only that sin had no place among them.

[1] Irenæus



CHAPTER VI.

'MY FATHER'S HOUSE.'

AT the age of thirteen a Jewish boy was considered to pass the boundary between childhood and manhood. He was then called a 'son of the commandment,' or 'of the law,' and, being of age, was required to attend the feasts at Jerusalem.

As a matter of fact, however, this attendance began one or two years earlier than the fixed period, and the only incident of the youth of Jesus that stands on record is His journey, at the age of twelve, to Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph to keep the Pascha, or Passover, for the first time.

There were three great feasts in the Jewish year, of which the Pascha, commemorating the deliverance from Egypt, was the first and greatest; secondly came the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), or of First-fruits; and lastly the Feast of Tabernacles, which reminded the Jews of their sojourn in the wilderness. Originally it was the rule for all males to go up to Jerusalem for each of these feasts, but at this time it had probably

become the custom for them to attend once only in the year, on the occasion of the Passover.

That journey must have been a very delightful one. Much stir and excitement would reign in Nazareth for weeks before; and as the women met to draw water from the fountain at eventide, or as the boys climbed the hill-top behind the village and looked over the wide, glorious landscape in the light of the setting sun, they would talk much of the coming pilgrimage. All over Palestine preparations were made for the thousands who would soon be travelling. Bridges and roads were mended, and everything was done to 'prepare the way of the people.'[1]

At last the day of departure came. On a bright spring morning the band of pilgrims started from Nazareth. Only a few women and children, with men who were too infirm to take the long journey, were left behind. Some of the travellers were riding on mules and asses, others were walking; and thus they bent their steps along the rough mountain path that leads through the narrow valley into the open country. Down into the wide plain of Esdraelon they passed, here to be joined by caravans of pilgrims from other places. At night they encamped in some pleasant spot where streams of water were found; by day they travelled gladly onwards, singing together some of the 'Songs of Degrees,' or 'Songs of the Ascents,'[2] which are to be read in the Book of Psalms, and which were chanted at different stages on the way. At this time of

[1] Isa. lxii. 10.

[2] See Ps. lxxxiv., cxxii., cxxxiii.

A WOMAN OF NAZARETH.

year the country was gay with flowers and musical with the song of birds; the corn was ripening, the brooks were full of water, and all nature seemed to rejoice with the pilgrims who were pressing towards the hills of Jerusalem. How happy the children must have been! We may imagine that Jesus felt the same delight as the others, for He was a child, although the Son of God, and we may without irreverence believe that His heart bounded with pleasure at the sweet spring-time and the smiling country through which He passed.

Nazareth was about eighty miles away from Jerusalem, and on the fourth or fifth day of the journey the travellers came in sight of her walls. 'Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth,' the city was called; and it well deserved the praise. It was built upon two heights, Mount Zion and Mount Moriah, with the valley of the Tyropœon between them, spanned by a magnificent viaduct. On Mount Zion, which was the higher of the two hills, stood the splendid palace built for King Herod, and near it three massive castles towered high above the city walls, while other imposing buildings rose around. But more beautiful and more welcome to the eager eyes of the pilgrims was the Temple that stood on the opposite mount, with its glittering roofs and marble colonnades, and the thin line of smoke, rising into the spring sunshine, to tell of the constant service within.

From the walls terraced gardens sloped steeply down to the ravines that on three sides encompass Jerusalem; the eastern valley,[1] separating the city from the Mount

[1] Commonly called the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

of Olives, was watered by the brook Kedron, and had the same name. Down by the brook-side, in the adjoining ravine of Hinnom, over the Mount of Olives, and throughout the neighborhood, the pilgrims made for themselves shelters of wicker-work mats and boughs. The inhabitants of Jerusalem opened their houses freely to receive strangers on the occasion of the feast; but an innumerable multitude [1] came thither from all parts of the Roman Empire, so that the accommodation was far too scanty for their need.

The Temple, whither Jesus had been already brought in His infancy, had been rebuilt by Herod the Great in the most superb manner, and was not yet finished.

Four cloisters, with ranks of marble pillars forming aisles, surrounded the outer court, or Court of the Gentiles, above which ran the terrace of the Temple. Next to the terrace came the wall of the Temple buildings, strictly so called, in which were splendid gates, the most magnificent being that on the east, called 'the Beautiful.' [2] Ascending by a flight of steps to the latter, the worshipper entered the Court of the Women, so called because two galleries were set apart in it for women. By fifteen steps the upper court was reached, where the Levites were placed, who performed the musical part of the worship, and where the far-famed

[1] Josephus says, in describing one Passover, that the high priests found the number of sacrifices was 256,500. Not fewer than ten nor more than twenty persons could share at one sacrifice, for it was not allowable that anyone should feast alone. At the lowest computation, therefore, this amounts to more than two and a half millions.

[2] Acts iii. 2.

Nicanor gate shown in the brilliancy of Corinthian brass. This upper court was separated into two parts: the narrower being called the Court of Israel, and the wider that of the Priests.

In the innermost space of all stood the Sanctuary, divided into the Holy and the Holy of Holies, built of marble blocks, with gilded spikes rising from its lofty roof to prevent the alighting of any unclean bird. Around the Sanctuary and each of the courts were various chambers, used for teaching or for different purposes connected with the Temple service. The whole building was of unspeakable splendor, white, and wonderful with spotless marble, gleaming with gold. Here an elaborate system of worship, too intricate to describe in detail, was constantly carried on, and here the pilgrims met in vast numbers on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan [1] to begin the Passover ceremonies.

The Passover festival lasted a week, but for two days only was it necessary to attend in the Temple. On the third day it was lawful to return home, and the countless bands of pilgrims, among whom doubtless were Joseph and Mary, began to disperse.

Night came; and when the caravans of Galilean travellers gathered as usual for their encampment Joseph and Mary could not find Jesus. During the day they had not missed Him, for the crowds were great, and they supposed He was with some friend or relative. But now their anxiety and alarm were excited, and

[1] This was April 8, in A. D. 8, the (presumed) year of His visit.

after a troubled night of enforced inaction they hurried back to Jerusalem, and eagerly sought the missing One. It is strange they should not have gone to the Temple first of all, but it was not till late on the following day—the third from which their loss was discovered—that they found Him.

On Sabbaths and feast-days the members of the Sanhedrin were accustomed to come out on the terrace of the Temple and teach all who would listen, doubtless allowing full liberty of question and answer. The Passover feast was not yet over, and it was probably among some such gathering, seated on the terrace floor hearing and questioning the learned doctors, that Jesus was discovered. Those grave and reverend men were marvelling at the understanding of the Child; and yet He was not, as He is sometimes pictured, standing with uplifted finger to discourse and lecture to His elders, but was modestly taking the usual place of a pupil.

Joseph was probably amazed and abashed to see the Boy who had shared his home and toil thus suddenly become the subject of interest and wonder to the learned of the land; but Mary, with a mother's eagerness, presses forward and utters words of tender reproach: 'Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold, *Thy father* and I sought Thee sorrowing.'

Then came the first words of our Saviour that are on record and they are full of deep meaning. The conversation with the doctors may have helped to reveal to Him the Divine light that was growing in His soul; for His consciousness of His own nature developed itself gradually. Not at one sudden bound

did the child Jesus comprehend that He was the Divine manifested in the human; the unfolding of His being took place in accordance with the laws of life that have their origin in God.

'How is it that ye sought Me?' He answered; 'wist ye not that I must be about *My Father's* business?'[1]

Mary has spoken of His earthly father; He, with gentle emphasis, reminds her of that which the uneventful intercourse of daily life may have put into the background, and which, perhaps for the first time, He realizes with complete absorption of soul—that He has indeed a mission for God, who is His Father.

Should she not have been aware of this—she, the mother who knew the wonders connected with His birth, the greetings in the Temple from Simeon and Anna, the visit of the Magi? Yet 'they understood not the saying which He spake unto them.' So was it all through the life of Jesus. If any reader knows what it is to be constantly misunderstood, let him remember that it was our Lord's continual experience, even with regard to those who were His nearest and dearest friends. And His example is full of teaching. For, though He had just received a tribute of astonished interest from the masters in Israel—though He had, by His conversation with them, gained a deeper insight into the sublime mystery of His own nature, yet He was submissive at once to His parents' wish; for He

[1] The rendering 'in My Father's house,' contains only a part of the truth. The words are ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου, 'among My Father's matters'—'in His house, in search of His truth, mindful of His purposes' (Dr. Fairbairn).

'went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He was subject unto them.'

Once more we are told that Mary 'kept these sayings in her heart.' Twelve years ago the predictions of others had roused her awe and wonder; now the words of her Son Himself give food for deep meditation. Yet many years followed of quiet home life at Nazareth, of which we have no other account than that 'Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.'

Although we know so little of our Saviour's youth, this incident sheds a light upon the rest. Christ has given us the true ideal of childhood spent in seclusion, yet enlightened by the Divine Spirit; submissive to earthly parents, yet owning obedience to a Heavenly Father; growing day by day in mental and bodily strength, and beautiful in the eyes of man and of God.

CHAPTER VII.

PREPARATION FOR THE MINISTRY OF JESUS.

FOR about eighteen years longer Jesus lived at His home in the retirement of the Galilean hills. The Gospels are silent concerning the time, but there is one verse that throws a little light upon the history of these years. It contains the words uttered by the inhabitants of Nazareth after His ministry had begun: 'Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?'

Mary only is mentioned here, and not Joseph; from which fact, and the absence of any word concerning him after the visit to the Temple, it may be regarded as tolerably certain that he died during the youth or early manhood of Jesus.[1] Other brothers and sisters had meanwhile been born,[2] and Jesus, as the eldest son,

[1] Tradition tells us that Joseph died when Jesus was nineteen; it is very likely true, but cannot be certainly known.

[2] There has been a vast amount of discussion as to whether these brothers and sisters of Jesus were literally so, or were His first cousins, the children of a half-sister of Mary, bearing the same name, who married Alphæus or Clopas. The reason for supposing

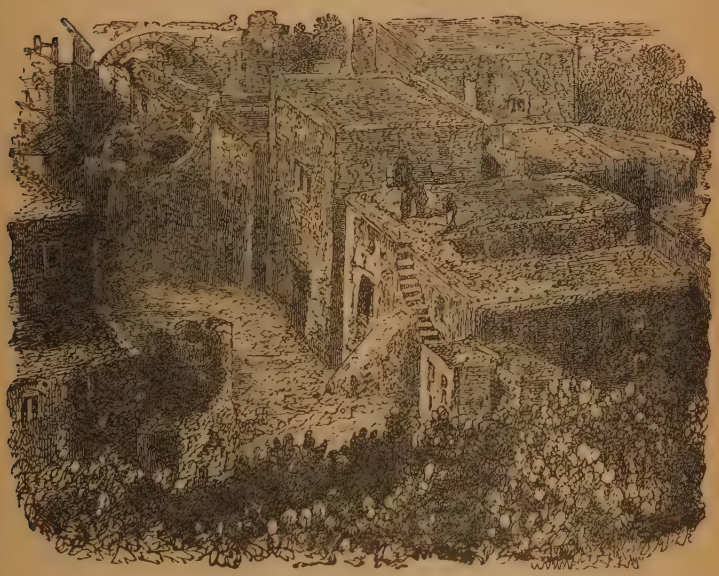
was doubtless the bread winner of the family. His brother James was afterwards the head of the Church at Jerusalem; but during all the life of the Saviour neither James nor the other brethren understood His mission in the very least.[1] For did they not see him working, as their father had done, at the trade of a carpenter? He did not disdain to make with His own hands the ploughs and yokes that were used by the husbandmen in the fertile fields below Nazareth. Ay, and He would do His work carefully and excellently, too, so that the patient, large-eyed oxen should not feel the slightest galling pressure from the yokes fashioned by His hand, and man and beast alike should own that the implements He made were the very best of their kind. He could not have been rich; for though carpenters in large cities earned much money, this would not be the case in a secluded little town like Nazareth. Thus He showed that labor and honest poverty are honorable by accepting both as His early lot.

There is a beautiful picture by Holman Hunt, which

this to be the case is chiefly a dislike felt by the early Church to the idea that Mary should have had any other children, and there are sundry other coincidences, which need not here be dwelt upon, that seem slightly to color the supposition. But the evidence of the Gospels is undoubtedly in favor of the natural interpretation of the words 'brothers and sisters.' 'His brethren' are mentioned nine times in the Gospels (Matt. xii. 46; xiii. 55; Mark iii. 31; vi. 3; Luke viii. 19; John ii. 12; vii. 3, 5, 10) and once in the Acts (i. 14), in immediate connection, in almost every instance, with Mary, his mother; and not a word is ever dropped to suggest that the relationship is not to be literally understood. Jesus is also called, in Luke ii. 7, Mary's *first-born* Son.

[1] Mark iii. 21; John vii. 3-5.

some readers may have seen. It is called 'The Shadow of the Cross,' and represents Jesus in His carpenter's shop at the close of a day's labor. His implements are around Him; the shavings of the wood on which He has been working lie thickly strewn on the floor; and



HOUSES IN NAZARETH, SHOWING EXTERIOR STAIRCASE.

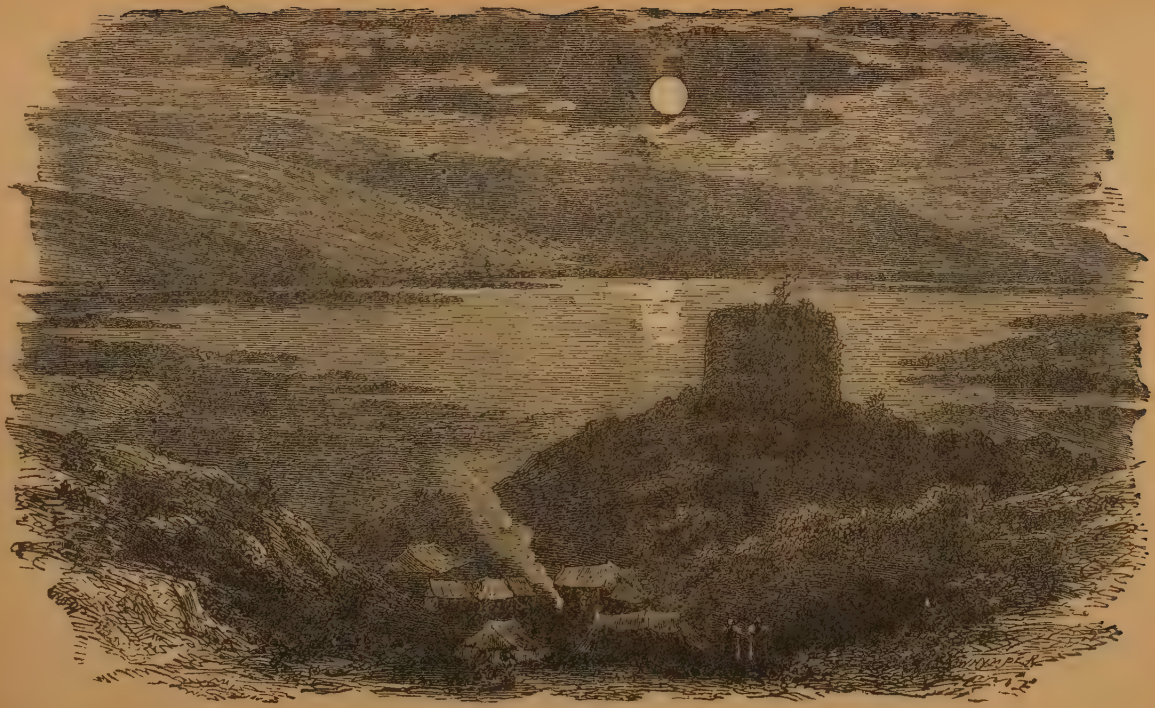
He is flinging up His arms to rest them after the monotonous toil. As He does so, the light of the setting sun throws the shadow of a cross upon the floor behind him, and Mary, who is engaged in the corner of the room, notices the emblem with wonder and alarm. We need not believe in any such foreshadowing of His

coming lot; yet we cannot but feel sure that while His hands were engaged in work His mind was occupied in preparation for His coming life and death.

And preparations, too, were going on for His ministry in the world around. Under the universal sway of Rome, nations, formerly hostile, were now perforce united; and men were becoming prepared to realize dimly that, instead of being enemies because they were of different races, there was such a thing as the brotherhood of mankind, which might one day be recognized by all. Peace still rested on the earth; the roads and laws of Rome were being carried everywhere throughout her dominions. The mild rule of Augustus had given place to the harsher sway of Tiberius, who detested the Jews and their religion. The spirit of disaffection had not been crushed, but only smothered for a while, by the defeat of Judas the Galilean, and men were hoping and longing for the Messiah. Herod Antipas was still tetrarch of Galilee, but Pontius Pilate, becoming sixth procurator of Judæa when Jesus was twenty-nine years old, awakened much greater hatred than this dissipated and indolent son of Herod the Great by planting military standards near the Temple, and in other ways outraging the religious feelings of the people.

Some of the Jews sought consolation in an exact fulfilment of every minute religious rite, whether it were ordered by the Law or formed part of the oral tradition. These were the PHARISEES,[1] who were

[1] Derived from *perushim*, separated, because they professed a loftier sanctity than other men.



THE DEAD SEA.

divided into two parties, the disciples of Hillel, a gentle and tolerant Rabbi, and the disciples of Shammai, who were bigoted and unscrupulous. But the whole teaching of Pharisaism was that of the binding authority not only of the letter of the Scriptural law, but also of the mass of tradition that had been handed down with additions in every generation. The Divine light in the soul of man was not recognized or understood by them; religion consisted in a slavish observance of a vast multitude of forms. The teaching of Jesus was the strongest possible protest against the Pharisaic school, and, humanly speaking, His denunciation of the Pharisees caused his death. Hence it is important to understand their point of view, that by contrast we may understand the spirit of Christ as we follow his life; and instead of vaguely regarding them as a proud Jewish sect, we should carefully note their principles in the various instances that arise of the conflict between the Master and themselves.

The ESSENES were another religious sect, who led an ascetic life in communities in the desert and on the mournful shores of the Dead Sea. They practised an incessant observance of ceremony, in the purifying of themselves, their vessels, dishes and clothing; and strove, as far as they knew how, to lead a holy life. Like the monks of a later period, they, for the most part, renounced marriage, and believed that the constant mortification of the body was necessary to the purification of the soul. In contrast with these earnest fanatics, the SADDUCEES laughed at all extremes, denied the

resurrection, and opposed the Pharisaic adherence to religious traditions.

While the Pharisees were exhibiting their piety and trying to swell their ranks—while the Essenes were saying, by their silent example, that men should withdraw from the world if they would be righteous—while the Sadducees, worldly and sceptical, were sneering at both factions—a teacher who was distinct from all these sects arose in Judæa. This was John, the son of the priest Zacharias and Mary's cousin Elisabeth. Though young, he was a stern and self-denying man, who from his boyhood had loved to roam in 'the wilderness,' a region of barren hills and valleys west of the Dead Sea. He wore coarse garments, and satisfied his hunger upon locusts [1] and wild honey;[2] caring nothing for the pleasures of life, but only for the restoration of the sinful people. Like the prophets of old, he saw Israel fallen from her high ideal; he scorned the slavish adherence to the ceremonial law that marked her religion, while the righteousness of the heart was overlooked and neglected.[3] On the banks of the Lower Jordan men flocked to hear him preach, for his words were full of force and fire. In the sternest language he rebuked hypocrisy, and told his hearers that if they would be saved from the wrath to come they must not rely on Abrahamic descent, but must lead a good and honest life. He cared nothing for the innumerable purifications of hands and vessels which had grown into such importance in the eyes of the Pharisees and

[1] Lev. xi. 22. [2] Ps. lxxxi. 16.
[3] Compare Isa. i. 16, 17; lviii. 6, 7.

the Essenes, but he caused his disciples to enter the waves of the rushing river as a sign of their repentance; to show that, as the stains of their journey were washed away by the pure, bright water, their life was henceforth to be changed and cleansed. And for this, Divine help, in a form they knew not, was at hand. He told the crowds who flocked to his baptism—Pharisees, Sadducees, publicans, soldiers, and multitudes of all classes—that One was to come after him who was immeasurably greater, and to whose work his preaching and baptism formed but a prelude.

'Repent ye; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'

It was a stirring cry, and it rang through the length and breadth of the land. Its echo was heard in the distant mountain village of Nazareth; but Jesus knew already that the time had come when He was to leave the workshop and the quiet home[1] for His public

[1] St. Luke places the appearance of John the Baptist in the 'fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar,' at which period Jesus was about thirty years old. Tiberius began his reign as *associated* emperor with Augustus about the close of A. U. C. 764 or 765; his sole principate began A. U. C. 767. Jesus was born, as we have seen, probably in A. U. C. 750. If we date from the first accession of Tiberius as joint emperor, Jesus would be twenty-nine or thirty in the fifteenth year of his reign; if from the later period, He would be thirty-one or thirty-two. The first explanation is the one usually adopted as more consistent with the expression of St. Luke. John, therefore, began his ministry some time in the latter part of 779 A.U.C.; Jesus was baptized early in the following year, 780 (A. D. 27). Three years and a few months from that time, which most inquirers accept as the length of His ministry, would give A. D. 30 as the date of the crucifixion

A confirmation of this view is found in John ii. 20: 'Forty and six years was this Temple in building.' Herod began the reconstruction

ministry. He had now reached the age of about thirty; at last the calm, obscure life of daily toil and family intercourse was to be broken, and His mother must needs bid Him farewell. In the early spring of the year He took His way southwards to the fords of Jordan, to seek out the prophet-cousin who was proclaiming His advent.

John the Baptist had been waiting for a promised sign to show him which of all who should come to his baptism was the Messiah. When Jesus drew near, although John knew Him as a relative and must have heard the story of His birth, it does not seem that he fully understood His character. The impression produced by Elisabeth's story may have faded in thirty years; yet from all John had heard of his Cousin's blameless life he was reluctant to administer to Him the 'baptism of repentance,' and this hesitation was strengthened by the holy and heavenly look on the face of Jesus as He spoke to him.

'I have need to be baptized of Thee; and comest Thou to me?' he cried, in strange contrast to the scathing words that he had uttered to his former hearers. But Jesus encouraged him, saying that he was fitting for the present to fulfil all that was good and right for the people at large. He was not yet revealed as the Saviour of men, and the baptism in His case was an

of the Temple in the eighteenth year of his reign, probably the month Cisleu, A. U. C. 734. Forty-six years added to this gives 780, or A.D. 27, the year which we are supposing as the date of Christ's baptism, and consequently of the cleansing of the Temple, which took place shortly afterwards.

act of consecration, showing that He was about to enter on His ministry to the world.[1]

Thus Jesus entered the waters of Jordan; and after He had been baptized the sign was revealed to John for which he had been waiting. We are told that he saw the Holy Spirit descending from the parted heavens in the form of a dove, hovering over the head of Jesus, while a Voice sounded above them: 'Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.'

It does not appear that any besides Jesus and John heard the voice and saw the sign; but to the latter it must have brought wonderful gladness. He knew that all his exhortations to repentance would be of little use unless they were followed by further teaching and help. Men could make up their minds to turn from evil, but they needed a power outside themselves to inspire them with a continual enthusiasm; they were not strong enough to do the work once for all by mere force of will. Thus John knew that his teaching of repentance was but a preparation, and when God showed him that the Master had come, he may have felt inclined, though he was in the prime of ardent manhood, to say with Simeon, 'Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.'

Jesus withdrew after His baptism into solitude, and John continued his mission. The Sanhedrin at last sent a deputation to ask him who he was. They were astonished at the influence of this new teacher, and wanted

[1] The baptism of repentant men 'prepared them to receive pardon and salvation: that of Christ was His consecration to the work of bestowing those precious gifts.'—Leander's *Life of Christ*, § 42.

to know what authority he claimed for his vigorous preaching and his baptism. Was he Elijah, risen from the dead? they inquired. Or if not that great prophet, was he the Christ Himself—the 'Anointed One' who was expected to come and save the nation? John replied that he was neither of these, but that One was in the midst of them whom they did not know. The deputation retired, baffled and puzzled; but John continued his words of rugged strength, his initiatory baptism, until his work was stopped by a tyrant hand.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TEMPTATION.

THE baptism of Jesus and the Divine sign that accompanied it marked the close of His private life. He was now to enter upon his public ministry; and we may believe that His Divine Spirit was revealed in full strength to His human nature. In order to prepare for His mighty work, He was led apart for solitary meditation, and withdrew alone into 'the wilderness';[1] probably another part of the desolate, barren region where John was baptizing; a lonely, savage place, where wild beasts ranged in freedom. These did not attempt to harm Jesus or to flee from Him, but they 'came unto Him.' So gentle was His look, so radiant His whole presence with goodness, that they were attracted by an invisible power, and were not afraid to crouch at His feet or to fawn on His hand. He would not wantonly harm the meanest living thing, and of this they had an instinctive knowledge. Those who

[1] Tradition fixes the scene of the Temptation on a precipitous hill behind Jericho, called 'Quarantania,' in allusion to the forty days and nights of our Lord's fast. It is conjectured by some to have been the wilderness of Horeb, where Moses and Elijah had also fasted forty days. (Ex. xxxiv. 28; 1 Kings xix. 8).

are kind and tender to animals are but following in the footsteps of their Divine Master, around whom these wild creatures of the desert came in confidence and love.

For forty days Jesus remained in the wilderness—a period of mysterious conflict and seclusion, into which we may not penetrate. At the beginning as at the close of His ministry, the Son of Man entered into a supreme loneliness, where human sympathy could not watch with Him even for one hour. But at the end of the time the power of evil, which all the while had been assailing Him, gathered force, and attacked Him with three definite suggestions to warp His purpose and destroy His kingdom.

Jesus had been fasting, and His human nature, worn out with the long strain of spiritual exaltation, suddenly asserted its claims. All around Him in the desert stones were lying, that resembled small loaves, both in color and in shape.[1] He was hungry, and the tempter suggested to Him—whether in actual bodily form or in a prompting of the mind does not appear—that He should use His miraculous power and turn them into bread. The sign had come at His baptism, saying He was the Son of God. 'Then, if it is so,' suggests the Evil One, 'put forth your Divine will to satisfy your hunger.'

Jesus answers: 'It is written,[2] Man shall not live by

[1] These stones are known to travellers as *lapides judaici*, and to geologists as *septaria*. They were popularly regarded as petrified fruits of the Cities of the Plain.

[2] The perfect γέγραπται which is here used implies that the lesson is enduring.

bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;' literally, 'by everything that God is pleased to appoint.'

The quoted words were uttered when God fed the Israelites with manna in the wilderness, to show that He could satisfy their hunger by other means than that of their ordinary food. Jesus therefore, by using them, says in effect, 'I trust in God, My Father, who can satisfy My hunger even here, although it may not be with bread. And I will not use the power of working miracles, given to Me for the sake of others, for My own human needs, which I commit to Him who will sustain them.'

Thus the evil suggestion was repelled. Throughout the whole life of Jesus we see that He would never use His power for the sake of Himself. It was only for the good of others that He worked His miracles. To apply the gift to selfish ends would have been contrary to the course which He had chosen, of self-denial for man and absolute submission to God.

Again the temptation came to Him. The Evil One 'brought Him to the Holy City, and set Him on the pinnacle of the Temple.' This was probably the tower at the eastern end of the south cloister, upon whose summit a priest daily announced the earliest streak of dawn, and from which the gaze would plunge sheer down into the valley of Kedron far below. The first temptation had been to defy God's providing care; the second was the direct opposite, to take undue advantage of it, by alighting, in miraculous descent, among priests and people. And the tempter uses the same

weapon that Jesus has just employed for his discomfiture. He quotes Scripture, and says, 'If Thou art the Son of God, cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee; and on their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest haply Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.'

'Let Thyself be wafted downwards from this dizzy height in sight of all the people; the sudden wonder will prove Thee to be Divine, and Thou wilt only be acting in a way consistent with Scripture in thus trusting God's promise.'

The tempter cunningly omits from the verse that he quotes the words 'to keep Thee in all Thy ways.' And in the reply of Jesus He shows that the promise of Divine protection applies only to man's appointed ways —the course of duty. 'It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,' is His answer. That is, 'Thou shalt not presume on His protecting care, or challenge Him to show His almighty power in saving thee from the consequences of a vainglorious, foolhardy act, in contradiction to the appointed scheme of thy life.'

The tempter had appealed vainly to the hunger of the body, and to the hunger of the mind for notoriety that might be supposed to influence the coming Teacher. In both he had failed, and at last he summoned all his strength.[1] In some way that we cannot understand,

[1] The order of the second and third temptations is transposed in Luke. The account given by Matthew is followed, as the sequence, ending with the dismissal of Satan, seems the more natural one; he alone uses the words 'then,' 'again,' as telling a consecutive story, and as an apostle he was more likely to have heard it from Jesus Himself.

he raised before the eyes of Jesus a vision of the splendor and magnificence of the kingdoms of this world, and promised to make them His if He would do one act of homage to evil. In other words, the suggestion was that the Messianic kingdom should be established at once and openly by worldly means and concession to base methods.

Jesus knew that He had come to be king of men—but He also knew that His kingdom was 'not of this world.' Not by one stride of conquering majesty was it to be won, but by the slow development of ages. Not with one bound was He to ascend an outward throne of supremacy; but through a life of suffering and self-denial, ending in the bitter cross, He must needs gain gradual empire over the hearts of men.

With stern words He rebuked the unhallowed spirit that strove to tempt Him from His destined path, and at last He was left in peace, when, Luke tell us, 'angels came and ministered unto Him.' The conflict was past, and the victory won.

Thus Jesus was tempted Himself, that He might be able to help those who are tempted. Although the Son of God, His Divine Spirit was enshrined in our human nature, and it was on this human side that the spirit of evil hoped to gain an advantage over Him. The story of the Temptation, which must have been told by Jesus Himself to His disciples, could have had no meaning unless there really had been trial and resistance. By the conditions of His humanity He possessed free will; but the temptations that assailed the pure citadel of

His soul from without found no traitor lurking among the garrison within.

Jesus left the wilderness, with the scheme of His life, which must long have been maturing among the Galilean mountains, moulded into firmness by the trial through which He had passed. Well He knew that the Messiah whom the Jews were expecting was one who should instantly reveal Himself and form an outward kingdom. To comply with this desire, and thus (apparently) hasten His empire over humanity, had been the suggestion of the tempter, but it had been successfully resisted; and, firm in His purpose to found the kingdom of God in a spiritual sense, He returned to the fords of Jordan which He had quitted six weeks before.

John the Baptist was still here, surrounded by an eager crowd of disciples. On the day after he had received the deputation from the Sanhedrin he saw Jesus approaching, and before his astonished listeners he pointed to Him and exclaimed, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.'

How changed were the words of John from the time when he first spoke of the Messiah! Then he prophesied of One who should come to try the hearts of men with stern scrutiny: to divide the good from the bad, and to 'baptize with fire.' Since then he must have gained the heavenly intuition that the words in Isaiah liii. 7, referred to Christ. And in some dim, far-off way he recognized that the sorrows of the pure and gentle Jesus were to tend towards the salvation of mankind.

No one took much heed of the declaration until the

next day, when John was standing with two young men from Galilee who had lingered by his side after the dispersion of the crowd. Again the quiet, thoughtful figure of Jesus was seen passing near them, and John, looking earnestly upon Him, repeated, 'Behold, the Lamb of God.' The description sank deep into the heart of the two young Galileans; and, attracted by the gentle dignity and wonderful charm that beamed from His presence, they followed him reverently at a distance. They could not realize the full meaning of the words, but they knew instinctively that it was good to be near Him, and that He was not like other men. He turned, and when He saw them following He kindly asked whom they sought. They, longing for some conversation with Him, timidly inquired where He dwelt, calling Him by the name that the Jews gave to their religious teachers. 'Come, and ye shall see,' answered Jesus, in gracious welcome, and they returned with Him to His temporary dwelling, where they spent the remaining hours of the day[1] in conversation with their new-found friend and Master. One of the two thus chosen was John the Evangelist, who tells the story, but does not refer to himself by name; the other was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.

Those hours with Jesus had fully convinced the two happy disciples that He was indeed the 'Messiah' or

[1] The tenth hour (John i. 39) by the Jewish computations means two hours before sunset. It is, however, thought by many critics that John adopted the Roman reckoning of time, like our own, from midnight to noon, in which case the tenth hour would mean ten o'clock in the morning. See p. 108.

'Anointed One,' for whom Judæa was longing. On the next day Andrew lost no time in telling the news to his brother Simon Peter, and brought him also to Jesus. Looking upon him, and divining at once the strength of his nature, Jesus said, 'Thou art Simon, son of Jonas; henceforth thou shalt be called "the Rock"' (Cephas in Syriac, Peter in Greek).

Andrew plays a very unimportant part in the history that follows; yet he did more good by the one act of bringing Peter to Jesus than he could have achieved by many conspicuous deeds on his own account. The good that lies nearest to us, simple as it seems, is first to be done; and, like this call of Peter, its results may spread far beyond our utmost thought.

These three disciples were all fishermen by calling, from Bethsaida, on the Lake of Galilee. On the fourth day after the return of Jesus from the scene of the Temptation, they accompanied him northwards in the direction of His former home. As they journeyed they met a young man, Philip by name, also a fisherman of Bethsaida, and to him was accorded the Master's gentle invitation, 'Follow Me.' It was at once obeyed; and Philip on the next day sought out his friend Nathanael,[1] to whom he eagerly told his new discovery: 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write.'

'Can He be anyone who has come out of Nazareth

[1] Bartholomew (literally Bar-Tolmai, the son of Tolmai) is regarded as identical with Nathanael. In the Gospels where the name of Nathanael is omitted that of Bartholomew appears in its place, and always in close connection with Philip (Matt. x. 3; Luke vi. 14).

—that obscure village?' cries Nathanael in incredulous amazement. Philip enters upon no argument; he simply says, 'Come and see.' Nathanael came; and Jesus, as he approached, recognizing the candor of his look, said: 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.'

Nathanael, struck by these words and by the look of the speaker, inquired how Jesus knew him. Jesus replied that but a little while ago He had seen him sitting alone under the fig-tree.

Very probably Nathanael had been absorbed in silent thought and religious emotion during his lonely vigil;[1] and the pointed reference to the time, as well as the superhuman knowledge shown by Jesus, at once overwhelmed Him with a sense of conviction. He recognized Him as the Son of God, the King of Israel, and unhesitatingly and joyfully became one of His followers. It is significant that, in reply to Nathanael's words, Jesus calls himself the *Son of Man*. Not in sudden Divine splendor nor in earthly kinship was his mission to be manifested. Rather was He to live, a man among men, until He made His power felt through humiliation and suffering.

It was part of the purpose of Jesus that He, like other teachers, should be surrounded by a band of disciples, who should hand down His unwritten teaching, and act as witnesses for Him after His death. Five out of the number were thus already chosen, though

[1] It was the custom of pious Jews to study their *Crishma* or office of daily prayer under a fig-tree.—FARRAR.

the separation from their ordinary life was not yet final. In gracious intercourse and reverent hanging on His words the little company passed onwards through the land now bright with the beauty of early spring, and bent their steps into Galilee.

CANA IN GALILEE.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VILLAGE WEDDING.

ON the third day after the departure of Jesus from the fords of Jordan, a household at the village of Cana[1] in Galilee was all astir with marriage rejoicings. Among the guests were Mary and her younger sons, from which circumstance, and her apparent familiar footing in the household, it has been conjectured that either the bride or bridegroom was related to her. All was brightness and gaiety; there was only one drawback to the pleasure, and that was the absence of Jesus, whom His mother longed to see after this first separation.

But what is this news that spreads quickly through the village? Jesus has come—not alone, for with Him are five companions, one of whom (Nathanael) had his

[1] Cana is either the modern Kefr Kenna, about four miles N.E. of Nazareth, or Kanâ-el-Jelil, nine miles N. Tradition favors the former site, and as it is nearer to Nazareth, and on the high road from Nazareth to Gennesareth (which Jesus traversed immediately afterwards), it is probably correct. Kefr Kenna is a pleasant village rising terrace above terrace on the slope of a hill.

home at Cana, and was doubtless well known to the bridegroom. With eager hospitality the giver of the feast urges them all to stay, and they enter the happy home. Mary looks anxiously at her beloved Son, and sees on His face the signs of His sojourn in the wilderness. Pale and worn with fasting, there is yet a spiritual power on His brow, a light in His eyes, that show her He has entered upon a new phase in His life, and she tremblingly hopes that a time has come when He will manifest His power.

How long the festivities lasted we do not know. After the bride had been brought at twilight with rejoicing to the bridegroom's home, it was usual to keep up the feast for a week, though in the case of the poorer classes one or two days sufficed. However this might be, at a certain period in the entertainment it was found that the wine had run short. Perhaps the bridegroom had not provided enough to satisfy the needs of six additional guests; but hospitality was considered by the Jews so sacred a duty, that it would cause the host keen mortification to find the supply insufficient.

In this difficulty Mary, who felt for the bridegroom's distress, turned instinctively to Jesus, and said to Him, 'They have no wine.' His reply, which reads rather harshly in our translation, was in reality courteous and gentle as well as firm. The term translated 'woman' was rather one of honor than of discourtesy, and was afterwards used by Jesus on an occasion of special tenderness. But He knew that Mary meant to suggest He should supply the deficiency in some way, and He says, in effect, 'You have hitherto thought of Me as

your Son; henceforth you must know that I lead a life apart from that earthly relationship. Not at your prompting am I now to act, but in accordance with "My Father's business," that you cannot fathom.' Mary felt no harshness in the answer, and bade the servants be ready to obey any command He might give.

Near the door, probably in the covered gallery into which all the rooms opened, were standing six large stone jars,[1] with green leaves stuffed into their narrow mouths to keep the water within fresh and cool. Jesus bade the servants fill these to the brim, draw out some of the contents, and carry them to the guest who had been chosen as ruler of the feast. They must have wondered at the order; but when the chief guest tasted what they had brought, he found it wine. Turning to the bridegroom, not knowing whence the fresh supply had come, he laughingly said to him, 'Most men place the best on the table first, but you have kept it till the last!'

'Son of Man'—the title recently used by Jesus in speaking to Nathanael of Himself—found apt illustration in this, His first miracle.

For His sympathy with humanity is its great lesson. He would not turn stones into bread to satisfy His own

[1] 'Containing two or three firkins apiece.' The 'firkin' was perhaps equivalent to the Jewish bath, rather more than eight gallons; or perhaps the expression in the original (*μετρητής*) may mean the Roman *amphora*, about five gallons, which would give the total quantity as quite sufficient to fill a large jar. The Jewish habit of constant purification made it necessary to have a large daily supply of water standing ready, and on the occasion of a festivity the quantity would naturally be increased.

hunger, but to comfort the heart of a simple village host He turned water into wine. And surely He meant to show that the innocent pleasures of family life have His approval. He does not wish men to shut themselves out from the world, in severe and joyless celibacy, like the monks and saints of old; and even now He is best pleased to look upon happy family circles, where bright, innocent gaiety and laughter reign, and where the duties of daily life are cheerfully done in the fear of God.

The faith of the new disciples, which had been attracted by Jesus Himself, not by any miracle, was strengthened by this occurrence; yet so quietly and unobtrusively was it performed that it seems to have aroused but little attention.

The wedding was over; and Jesus, with His mother, brethren, and disciples, left Cana. The village lay on the road to the Lake of Galilee, and thither they proceeded, for Jesus wished to make His home at Capernaum upon its north-west shore, if home it could be called, since He left it so often in journeying. It was a charming spot to form the centre of His ministry; a bright and active city, swarming with life, yet surrounded by the beauty of nature, for it stood in the green and fertile plain of Gennesareth, a level space on the western shore of the lake, where the hills seem to withdraw a little from the water's edge that they may look down upon the smiling paradise at their feet.[1]

[1] Gennesareth is said to mean 'garden of abundance.' Josephus says of this plain, 'Its nature is wonderful as well as its beauty; its soil is so fruitful that all sorts of trees can grow upon it. . . . One may

HILLS ABOUT GENNESARETH.

The Sea of Galilee, called also the Sea of Tiberias and Lake of Gennesareth,[1] is a sheet of water thirteen miles in length by six in breadth. On the eastern side a green strip of land about a quarter of a mile broad forms the shore, overhung by hills, which only at one point run close down to the water's edge.[2] On the western side the mountains slope gently towards the borders of the lake, which in the time of Jesus were fringed with luxuriant groves of olives, oranges, figs, and palms.[3] This western shore was dotted with towns and villages, and numberless boats darted to and fro over the surface of the lake, whose clear, sweet waters swarmed with fish. In Capernaum there dwelt an active, thriving population, many of whom were fisher-folk, while others were occupied in some way in the traffic that streamed along the 'highway to the sea,' the high road from Damascus to Ptolemais (Acre), which passed through the town. Two stately cities, called by Herod Antipas and Philip 'Tiberias' and 'Julias,' after the Emperer Tiberius, and Julia, daughter of Augustus, displayed their splendor of heathen architecture, the

call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together.'

[1] In the Old Testament it is called the Sea of Chinnereth, or 'the Harp,' from its harp-like shape (Numb. xxxiv. 11 ; Josh. xii. 3).

[2] The probable scene of the cure of the Gadarene demoniac. See p. 196.

[3] Travellers now describe the greater part of the shores as utterly deserted. The lake lies in a deep depression, more than 500 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and the heat in the summer is of tropical intensity. The wholesale destruction of trees has doubtless wrought a change in the climate, for the active life that formerly existed here would now be impossible.

former on the south-western shore of the lake, the latter near the point at the northern extremity where the Jordan rushed into its waters. Hence the whole basin of the Sea of Galilee was the scene of a busy, stirring life, and when Jesus came hither Capernaum was the greatest possible contrast to His sequestered home amid the hills of Nazareth. Yet there were lonely ravines and hill-tops even in this populous district where He could retire for solitude; and to the eastern shore He, as we shall find, often withdrew for the quiet that He could not obtain in the busy western plain.

Such was the chosen home of Jesus; and, like the first miracle, it carries a significance all its own. John the Baptist had uttered his stirring cry in the sullen frowning wilderness beside the Sea of Death; Jesus came to dwell by the lake that was emphatically the Sea of Life, where men worked and children played; where the busy hum of cities rose among the smiling luxuriance of nature, the rivulets hurried merrily down the hills into the sea, and everything spoke of living energy and fertilizing force. He had not come to take men out of the world, but to help them to lead pure lives in it. John's message of repentance and the wrath to come was fitly delivered in ascetic guise, in the barren waste, by frowning precipices. Jesus, in the haunts of men and the smiling home of natural loveliness, uttered the gracious message that was to ennoble and sanctify social life.

CHAPTER X.

THE OPENING MINISTRY.

JESUS stayed but a very short time at Capernaum on the occasion of His first visit, for the Passover was approaching, and He intended, like other Jews, to go up to Jerusalem with His disciples. He also knew that it was time to appear beyond the narrow circle of His own friends and to begin His public ministry, which He could best do in the capital when the crowds were gathered together. Again He journeyed with the blithe caravans of pilgrims through the country, gay and radiant in its spring dress and musical with the song of birds; again He entered Jerusalem, and mingled with the eager throngs who were celebrating their festal holiday.

But on entering the Temple He was shocked at the scene which met His view. The great outer court, or Court of the Gentiles, was more like a noisy fair than a part of God's sanctuary. Sheep and oxen, closely penned together, were standing, ready to be sold for sacrifice, on the marble pavement; doves were fluttering in large wicker cages, and dealers were shouting the praise of their stock; while money-changers were sitting behind tables to exchange the Greek and Roman coins of

foreigners for the Jewish silver half-shekel[1] that was to be paid as tribute to the altar by each pilgrim. The clamor of different tongues mingled strangely with the lowing of oxen, bleating of sheep, cooing of doves, and clinking of money; but, worse than this, thoughts of greed and gain were filling the hearts of buyer and seller.[2] It is thought that the family of Annas, the infamous high priest, had an interest in this market, and that it was identical with what is called 'the Bazaar of the Sons of Annas,' which was rightly unpopular in Jerusalem for its avaricious and unfair proceedings. Strange indeed that the worshipper should enter 'the Temple of his fathers through a market, where he bought the means of rightly approaching and worshipping their God.'[3]

The commerce grows fast and furious; the noise is disturbing the prayers of priests in the inner court. But who is this young Man, in Galilean dress, approaching? His step is quick; His eye flashes indignation; upon His brow sits enthroned a pure and noble majesty, that stops the sordid hucksters as they are about to offer Him their wares, for He looks transfigured by some inward enthusiasm that has no concern with mean dealings. All eyes are involuntarily turned upon Him as He stoops to the ground and hastily weaves into a scourge some of the rushes that are littered about for the cattle. Then, raising it on high, He orders the sellers of sheep and oxen, in a clear, vibrating voice that

[1] Exod. xxx. 13-15; Matt. xvii. 24.

[2] The Jews were notoriously an avaricious race; greed for gain was their besetting sin.

[3] *Studies in the Life of Christ*, Dr. Fairbairn, p. 120.

rings all through the court, to depart with their possessions, enforcing His words by driving the cattle before Him. He flings to the ground the tables of the astounded money-changers, while the coins roll hither and thither over the marble pavement; and though, mindful as He always is of living things, He will not hurt the doves by roughly overturning their cages, He cries to their owners, summing up the whole matter:

'Take these things hence; make not My Father's house a house of merchandise.'

'My Father's house!' The whole story was contained in those three words. Not only did He blame the irreverent desecration of precincts set apart for worship, but the lowering of the ideal relation between Father and child which it involved. The true meaning of the Temple, to Jesus, was a place where men loved to think that God drew near to their spirits, and all nations might feel they trod the same religious home. But when that filial and loving intercourse would have free scope, this wretched buying and selling stepped in, reducing the aspirations of the heart towards its Father into a mere matter of money. How could men love and worship Him in spirit and in truth, when even in the house they called His they were regulating their devotion to Him by formal acts of purchase and exchange? Jesus knew that this market under the beautiful Corinthian pillars was only the expression of a worship that had degenerated into a cold and artificial string of performances; and thus He began, as He ended, His ministry by its unsparing condemnation.

So strong was the power of His righteous indignation

that the motley crowd dared not resist Him. They knew that their work was unfit for God's house, though they could not catch the inner sense of the protest of Jesus; but the abuse had crept up gradually, and as no one cared to make a stand against it, it had been allowed to remain and increase. Now, at the first onslaught of a pure and ardent nature, it crumbled away. They let Him drive them forth, with all their goods, uttering, as we may conjecture, many an angry murmur, and shooting dark glances at Him as they sullenly yielded to His will.

The power of noble enthusiasm has been so often proved in this world that we need suppose no miracle to have been wrought here. Fearless zeal for what is right on the one hand, and consciousness of wrong-doing on the other, are unequally matched, and the former will often make one man prevail against a multitude.

The disciples, who were anxious to observe signs of the Messiahship in their new-found Master, remembered the saying in Psalm lxix. 9, 'The zeal of Thine house shall consume Me,' and applied it in their minds to the incident that had just happened. But the priests and Levites, who had the care of the Temple, were indignant at this sudden disturbance. They knew perfectly well that Jesus was in the right; they could not complain of the act itself, so fell back on the question, 'What business is it of yours? Give some sign to convince us that you, an unknown Galilean, have any right to interfere in this manner with practices from which we

derive profit and that we have winked at with our sacred eyes.'

No sign was really needed; the conscience-stricken obedience of the dealers to the words of one Man was sign enough if they had chosen to see it. But Jesus answered them in words that had a significance: 'Destroy this Temple; and in three days I will raise it up.'

The Jews were petrified with horror at what seemed such profane and daring words. The Temple had been in the process of rebuilding for forty-six years, and was not nearly finished, in some parts, as yet; it was the wonder of all beholders for its marble pillared cloisters, its gates of precious metal, its glittering roof, its mosaics, its aromatic wood, sculptures, and all its gleaming magnificence. And now this stranger dares to speak of its destruction!

'But He spake of the temple of His body,' adds St. John; and the words contain a prophecy of His death and resurrection. His body—the true Temple, for within it God dwelt with men—was to be raised in three days, and though the Jewish Temple was, in process of time, to be destroyed, the resurrection of Christ was to raise, on the foundations of the old theocracy, a spiritual edifice immeasurably nobler than the Jewish ritual that had its centre in the Temple. The priests and Levites, prejudiced already against Jesus by His bold act, treasured up this saying, which they answered with contemptuous words, and afterwards misquoted.[1]

[1] Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark xiv. 58.

During the remainder of His stay at Jerusalem Jesus did 'other wonderful works.' We are not told what these were; but they attracted attention, and many believed on Him. Yet, though their minds were convinced that He was no ordinary man, they did not follow Him with the unquestioning obedience of the Galilean disciples, and Jesus, knowing their hearts, did not reveal Himself and His mission fully to them.

One follower, however, He gained among the rich and powerful, named Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and a member of the Sanhedrin. He was timid by disposition, yet was too honest to stifle in his mind the impression that the words and acts of Jesus had made. He resolved, therefore, to visit Him; but he did so by night, that he might not be observed.

His first sentence owned that Jesus had come from God, as a teacher. Without entering on the discussion of His mission, Jesus at once unfolded to him the mysteries of the new birth; telling him that every one, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, if he would enter the kingdom of God must be 'born anew.' [1]

Nicodemus pretended to take the words literally, although the image of being 'born again' was familiar to Jewish teachers, who used it with reference to their proselytes. But Jesus went on to tell him of the spir-

[1] The phrase 'of water and the spirit,' John iii. 5, can scarcely be interpreted as of literal water, as the exaltation of a rite into such importance is unlike all the spirit of Christ's teaching. Rather does it mean inward purification, which is to take place at the time of the renewal of the life.

itual new birth—the forming anew of the heart, which was as varying in its method as the rise and fall of the night breeze around them, and yet which, although not seen or predicted, could be *felt*. This change of heart was to be wrought by belief on the only Son of God, who had been sent, not to judge, but to save the world.[1]

This was all very surprising to Nicodemus, for as a Jew he had been familiar with the idea of an earthly kingdom over which the Messiah was to rule, and his thoughts would lead him to consider that as a pious Jew he was already the fittest of members for this new community. Now he is told that it is all *spiritual;* and that he, like the meanest person, must undergo a change of heart in preparation for it. Scarcely would it have been wonderful if he had been offended; but instead of this he became a firm friend to Jesus. Although he did not come forth and openly join Him, we shall find that he remained faithful to Him in secret.

Soon after this interview Jesus left Jerusalem; but He lingered in the neighborhood on the banks of the Jordan with two or three of His disciples.[2] It was near the end of April, and the reapers were gathering in the harvest. In the bright warm weather Jesus and His followers could easily sleep in some tent or hut made

[1] John often blends his own reflections with the words of Christ that he is reporting, and it is very likely so here ; it seems that the Master's discourse ends with verse 15. and verses 16-21 express the thoughts of the disciple.

[2] It is uncertain at what part of the valley of the Jordan the disciples of Jesus baptized; perhaps 'Ænon, near to Salim,' where John also baptized, was the place of which Eusebius speaks, in the north of Judæa, just on the borders of Samaria.

of branches, or with no canopy but the sky; while food was in part supplied by the abundant fruits of the district and wild honey. For some months, in all probability, they led an outdoor life, and the disciples of Jesus baptized the people who flocked to hear Him. John the Baptist was still in the neighborhood, continuing his baptism of repentance, though probably many of his hearers were drawn away to Christ. John was glad and happy to see people deserting him for Jesus, but his disciples grew jealous for their master's honor, and at last, when some dispute with a Jew had irritated them, they broke out into complaint: 'Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptized, and all men come to Him.'

The answer of John is very beautiful for its humility and unselfishness. He reminded his followers that he had always said he was not the Christ, but only His forerunner; that Christ's glory must increase, while his must decrease. His utmost joy was to see Jesus honored, for whose sake he had called men to repent.

And John's ministry was nearly over. He happened about this time to cross the Jordan into the province of Peræa, where he intended to break fresh ground in his work; but it was like penetrating into a lion's den. Herod Antipas, whose dominions included Peræa, hated John because he had reproved him for unlawfully marrying Herodias; and she was fiercer in her malice than her husband. John was a stern, upright young moralist who scorned to flatter, or to say wrong was right to please a wicked ruler, and now he was to suffer

for his noble adherence to truth. Eager to avail himsel of his opportunity, Herod sent soldiers to seize the man who had ventured into his dominions, and had him carried off to a dismal fortress [1] beside the sullen waters of the Dead Sea. Here he was flung into a gloomy cell; his free, strong, active out-door life was exchanged for stifling, hopeless captivity; and he was left to meditate upon the past, hoping meanwhile for a future his eyes should never see.

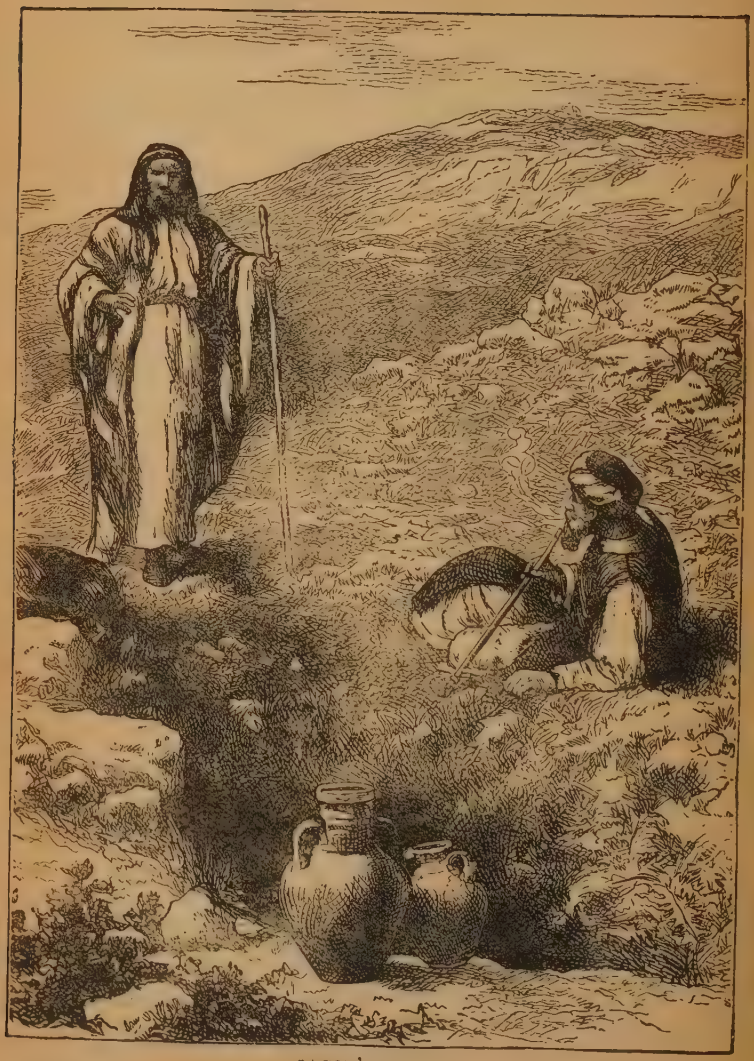
[1] Josephus says this was the fortress of Machærus, built by Alexander Jannæus, but strengthened by Herod the Great. Situated on the top of lofty rocks, it was called the 'diadem.' On three sides the precipices fell sheer away to tremendous depths, and the whole region was wild and desolate in the extreme.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

ALTHOUGH it is impossible to be absolutely certain, it seems probable that Jesus had now remained in Judæa for about eight months from the Passover in April. The record of this time is very incomplete, but doubtless He spent it in preaching beside the Jordan, and when that was no longer possible because of the time of year, He may have entered and taught in the synagogues of Judæa [1]. His reception was evidently not encouraging; and at last the news of the jealousy of John's disciples, doubtless fomented by the Pharisees, who looked upon Him already with no friendly eye, was brought to Him.

[1] See Luke iv. 44, where, as the margin of the R. V. will show, *Judæa* replaces *Galilee* in many ancient authorities. There are various indications in the Gospels from which we may indirectly gather that Jesus spent more time in the neighborhood of Jerusalem than is actually described. See Matt. xxiii. 37, and the whole story of the enmity of the inhabitants of the capital to Jesus, as to One whom they knew. For this reason, also from John iv. 35, we conclude that His stay in Judæa lasted till the winter.



JACOB'S WELL.

Shortly afterwards came the tidings that John was cast into prison. Jesus felt that it was time He should return to Galilee, the chosen sphere of His labors, sufficiently far away from the rigid priestcraft of Judæa to allow His teaching to develop without conflict at the very outset. So one day early in the year He, with His little band of disciples, started on the direct route for the North through the unfriendly region of Samaria. Their way, after climbing a steep hill, led down into a fertile plain, green with the springing corn, and surrounded by low hills, excepting on the western side, where it was overhung by Gerizim and Ebal, the abutments of two mountain ranges running from west to east. After travelling half way up this plain, the travellers came to a side valley branching sharply off to the left, and dividing Gerizim on the south from Ebal on the north. In this ravine the children of Israel had once assembled, while the priests stood on the twin mountains—the Mounts of Blessing and of Cursing—to pronounce blessings and curses in their ears.[1]

Jesus was weary with His long walk, and at the entrance to this valley He paused to rest. He chose as His seat a stone beside 'Jacob's Well,' which stands on a little knoll overlooking the plain under the shadow of Mount Ebal.[2] On His right hand the path ran up the

[1] See Deut. xxvii, 12; Joshua, viii. 33-35.

[2] This is almost the only spot in Palestine where we can feel perfectly certain the Saviour rested. The well is still there, and no dispute is possible; while the exact sites of most of His gracious deeds and words are effaced or doubtful, by reason of the destruction that has come upon the land.

gorge to Shechem or Sychar,[1] a mile and a half away, whither His disciples pursued their journey to buy provisions; on His left, the plain spread its wide cultivated fields to view.

It was 'the sixth hour'; we cannot be quite sure whether St. John is calculating by the Jewish or Roman method, and therefore do not know if it was noon or eventide, but we know that the Master felt thirsty as well as weary. Soon a Samaritan woman appeared coming down the valley with a jar and a cord attached, by the means of which she meant to draw some of the water that glimmered far below in the cool recesses of Jacob's Well. She had been walking by the stream that flows down the valley, yet she chose to take the journey from Shechem in order to fetch water from this sacred spot. As she approached Jesus asked her to give Him to drink. Had the woman not been a Samaritan she would have instantly complied with the request, for the need and the luxury of a cool draught of water are known so well in the East that every one is eager to help another to the boon. But she, recognizing Jesus by His dress and speech as a Jew, and knowing the enmity that existed between His nation and the Samaritans, expressed surprise that He should ask any favor from her.

With gentle disregard of her ungracious reply, Jesus speaks to her in a parable, using the actual water below

[1] Sychar is a corruption of the name Shechem, by the *m* being changed into *r*. Sychar means *a lie*, which the Jews doubtless had in mind in making the alteration. The modern name is Nablous, a corruption of the Greek Neapolis or 'New Town.'

them as an illustration of the water of life which He can give her.[1] She cannot understand; He has nothing to draw water with; and is He greater than the patriarch Jacob,[2] who sank this deep well for their use, that He should be able to give her better water than it contains? Jesus rejoins that he who drinks the water from Jacob's Well shall thirst again; but whosoever drinks the water that He has to give shall never thirst.

The woman still takes it literally, and, thinking of her weary toil with the heavy jar in the sultry summer and through the winter rains, she cries:

'Sir, give me this water; that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.'

But Jesus knows she is not yet able fully to understand what He means by the water of life—the love and knowledge of Himself, which satisfies all earthly needs. So He ceases the parable about the water, and, by a few heart-searching words touching her own personal history, He causes the astonished woman to cry out, 'Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet.'

She immediately proposes to Him—perhaps to change the subject of conversation—a question that had always been a source of contention between the Jews and

[1] Miss Whateley, in her *Ragged Life in Egypt*, says that the water-carriers cry in the streets of Cairo, 'The gift of God! the gift of God!' The word translated *living* means *flowing* (Gen. xxvi. 19), and does not, therefore, excite the woman's surprise. Yet Jesus had a deeper meaning in using the term.

[2] 'Our father Jacob.' Josephus says that the Samaritans boasted of their descent from Jacob when the Jews were prosperous, but denied any connection with the parent stock when they were in adversity.

Samaritans. Looking up at the hill Gerizim before them, she says:

'Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; but ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.'

The Samaritans believed that Gerizim, from whose summit Joshua had pronounced blessings on the children of Israel, was the most sacred spot in Palestine. Here, they thought, was the site of Paradise; here the Ark had rested; Abraham had met Melchizedek and bound Isaac upon its height; Jacob had dreamed his wonderful vision pillowed on one of its stones. They had a temple upon the mount from B. C. 409 to B. C. 130, when it had been destroyed by the Jewish leader John Hyrcanus. The Jews laughed at their pretensions, and also declared that the copy of the five books of Moses which the Samaritans possessed was not a genuine copy of the Law.

In His answer Jesus says, that in comparison with the claims of the Samaritans, the Jewish reading of antiquity is undoubtedly the more correct one. Yet all these controversies as to place and method of worship are mere outside matters, and are soon to be rendered of no account. True worshippers are acceptable to God, who is the Father of all alike, not by their choosing either Mount Moriah or Mount Gerizim as their sanctuary, but by their homage to Him 'in spirit and in truth.' For He is a Spirit; present everywhere to the heart that seeks to know Him; bound by no limits of gorgeous temples made with hands; dwelling not solely in the dim 'Holy of Holies' afar in Jerusalem,

but inhabiting all His creation. Thus He can be everywhere worshipped; and, if so, that worship must be independent of form and ceremony; wherever a loyal heart owns its Father, there speech between the Divine and the human becomes possible.

Such was the lesson that Jesus came to impress upon the dead formality of Judaism. An ever-present, spiritual God, caring not for sacrifice and solemn pomp, but caring much for right living, mercy, justice, and truth; this was the Father whom He came to reveal. The poor Samaritan woman, who thought nothing of living in sin while she drew water from a sacred well and interested herself about the right spot to worship God with propriety, was a fitting subject to whom he should break this great truth—a truth which the world has not yet fully realized. She was deeply impressed by words so unlike, in their dignity and power, to any she had ever heard before; yet she felt powerless to settle the question raised, and sheltered herself behind the general assertion: When the Messiah comes He is to unfold all these mysteries.

Jesus answered by the plain direct statement, the first avowal of His Messiahship that stands on record:

'I that speak unto thee am He.'

In the meantime the disciples had come down the valley from their errand to Shechem, and were surprised to see Jesus in close conversation with a woman;[1] yet their reverence for Him prevented them from expressing either surprise or inquiry. On the

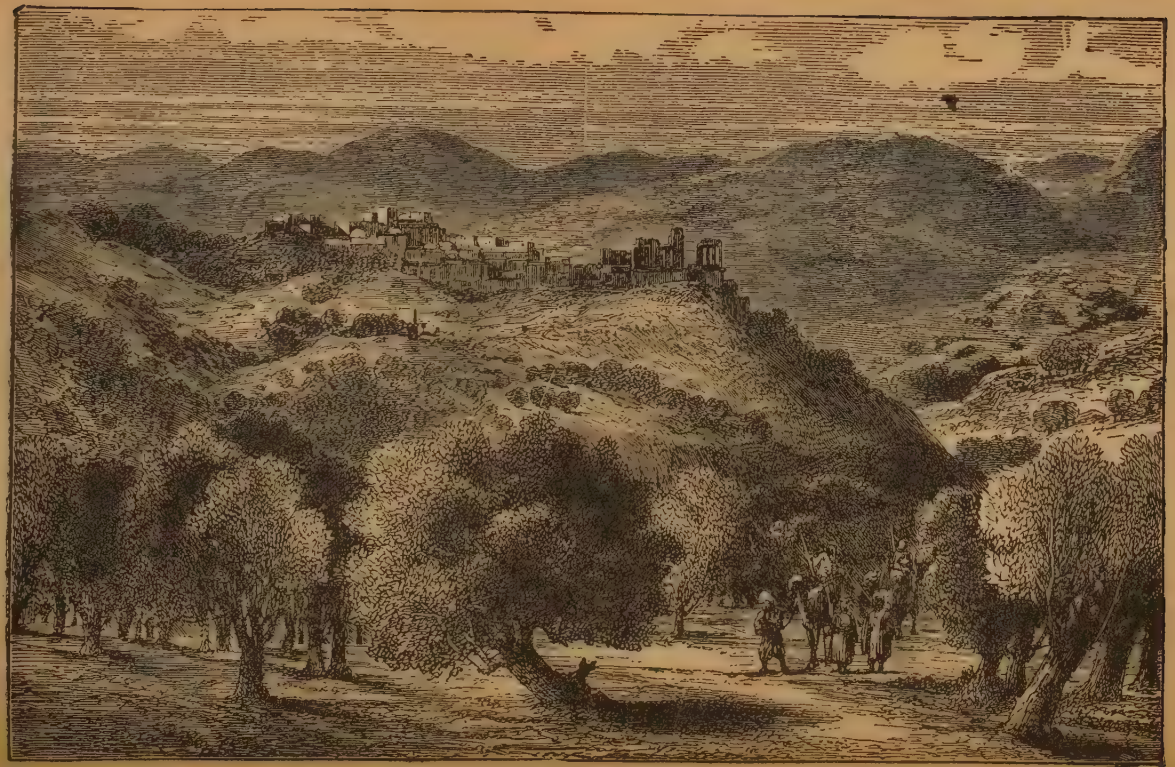
[1] The Jews regarded it as unbecoming for a Rabbi to hold conversation with a woman in public.

wonderful declaration of Jesus, however, the woman, whose mind had already been strongly stirred by His words, left her water-pot in her amazement and hurried off to tell her friends and neighbors: 'Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did!' she exclaims; 'is not this the Christ?'

The disciples begged Jesus to eat the food they had brought with them; but in His spiritual exaltation at the work in which He had been engaged He told them that He had food to eat of which they knew nothing. 'Can anyone have given Him food? they ask each other. But He goes on to tell them that His food consists in doing the will of God who sent Him—the work that needed sorely to be done. Then, looking over the wide plain and up the ravine, He continued: 'You say there are yet four months to the harvest;[1] but' (pointing to the people coming from Shechem towards Him down the valley) 'here is a harvest ready, which you shall reap, although you have not sown the seed.'

Jesus meant that the people were ready to be gathered into the kingdom of God; and so it proved. They begged Him to come and stay with them awhile, and He went with them up their beautiful valley, one of the fairest spots in Palestine, where rills and fountains abound; where in spring-time the olives are in full leaf, and the birds sing merrily beside the rushing

[1] There seems no reason why this should not be understood literally. As the harvest in Palestine is gathered about the end of April, it would fix this interview early in January or late in December.



streams. Two days he stayed in Shechem, and during this time many were convinced for themselves that He was the Saviour of the world.[1]

On leaving the town Jesus and His disciples followed the course of the pleasant vale until it led them into a wide basin enclosed by hills. In the centre rose an oblong, flat eminence crowned by the capital city of Samaria, which bore the same name as the country until Herod the Great gave it the title of Sebaste. It was a magnificent place, with fine public buildings and pillared colonnades, the ruins of which may still be seen; but Jesus seems never to have entered any of the splendid cities which bore the impress of King Herod, and He passed by Sebaste. Traversing the plain in the north of Samaria, He crossed the border into Galilee, but no longer did He find Himself unknown and unnoticed. The report of His 'signs' in Jerusalem, though we do not know what these were, and His eight months' ministry in Judæa, had spread His fame abroad throughout the land, so He was praised and honored as He passed from village to village.

He does not seem to have gone to Capernaum or to His old home at Nazareth at this time, but to have repaired again with Nathanael to Cana, the home of that disciple. Many friends must have remembered His first miracle, some nine or ten months ago; and He remained a short time among them.

[1] After His death Philip came and preached to the people of Samaria and won multitudes of converts (Acts viii. 5).

During His stay great excitement was caused in the village by the arrival of an officer belonging to the court of Herod Antipas.[1] Although Herod lived at Tiberias, on the Lake of Galilee, the officer's mansion was at Capernaum, and he now came to entreat that Jesus would make haste thither to heal his dying son. He had heard that this new Teacher had wonderful power, and He would surely come and exert it at his son's bedside.

The reply of Jesus is intended to make this man understand that He was not a mere magician, to work wonders at the call of every applicant. His miracles were for a higher purpose—credentials of His Divine mission—and He would not have this lost sight of in the benefits they conferred. But the courtier pleaded so earnestly that Jesus gave him the comfort he needed, not accompanying him, but saying simply, 'Thy son liveth.'

The courtier believed Him; and this is only one out of many instances which prove to us there must have been a wonderful power about the personal appearance of Jesus. His face, His glance, His slightest word, were often sufficient to create instant belief; and we have repeated testimony to the wisdom of Philip, when he would not argue with Nathanael about the claims of Christ, but simply said, 'Come and see."

The father went his way rejoicing, doubtless to some

[1] Manaen, the foster brother of Herod Antipas, afterwards became a humble follower of Jesus (Acts xiii, 1), and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, was a devoted friend to Him (Luke viii, 3), Some have conjectured that this 'nobleman' was Chuza himself.

lodging near at hand. It was 'the seventh hour' by St. John's reckoning—probably about seven o'clock in the evening—when Jesus spoke to him; and on the next morning, while pursuing his journey, he met some slaves who told him his son's illness had taken a favorable turn on the preceding day.

'At what time?' asked their master, feeling sure that the reply would correspond with the time when Jesus spoke the words, 'Thy son liveth.' So, indeed, it proved to be; and all the courtier's household believed in the Healer.

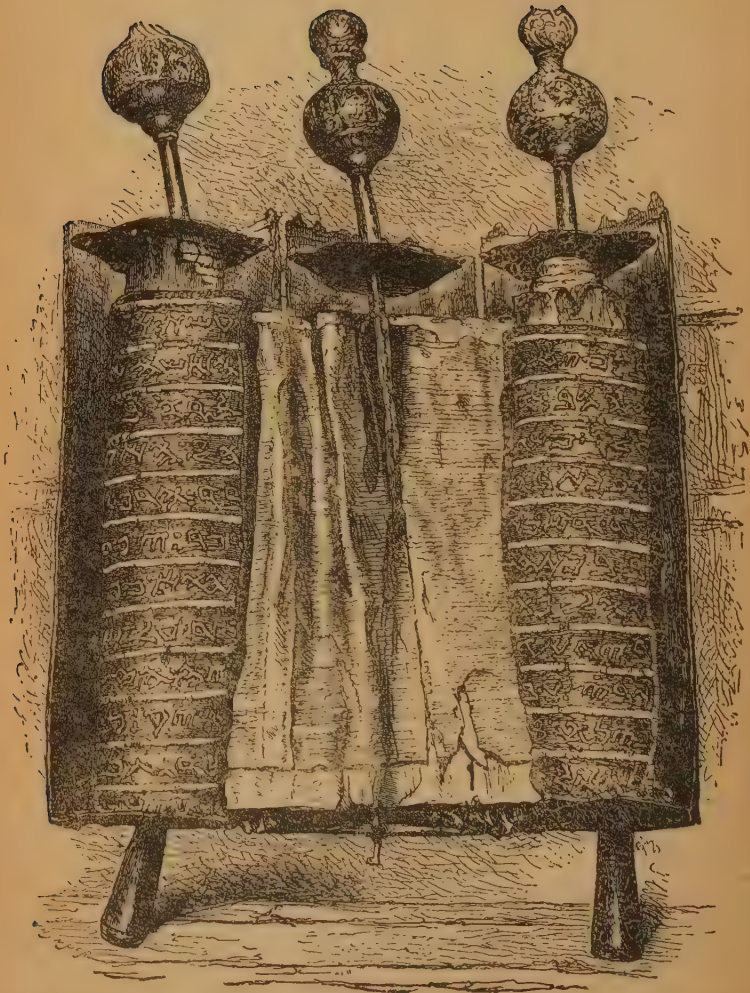
Thus, for the second time, Jesus marked His entrance into Galilee by the performance of a miracle.

CHAPTER XII.

REJECTION AT NAZARETH; WELCOME TO CAPERNAUM.

THE account of our Lord's Galilean ministry which now begins is derived from Matthew, Mark, and Luke; while John, who has described His public life since the Temptation, drops the thread of the narrative for a little while. It is impossible to be absolutely certain of the chronological order in which the different incidents occur; for the Evangelists do not profess to record the life of Jesus as a connected series of events. Their histories are for the most part but fragmentary accounts of different scenes in His life, thrown together without many exact indications of time; and to construct any 'harmony' which shall be final would be an impossible task. Happily it is not of supreme importance to know the exact succession of His acts and words; we can but accept the records that have been preserved, and try, as far as we can, to weave them into one beautiful story, that shall dwell forever in our hearts.

The stay at Cana probably lasted but a short time, and Jesus turned His steps once more to the bay of hills



ROLL OF THE PENPATEUCH PRESERVED AT SHECHEM—SAID TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY ELEAZAR THE SON OF AARON.

in which Nazareth nestles. Again He trod the mountain path, and entered the village where His childhood and youth were passed; but no longer was He looked upon with familiar, unquestioning gaze. The fame of His deeds at Jerusalem, of His healing the courtier's son at Capernaum, and perhaps of other unmentioned miracles in His short sojourn there, had preceded Him, and His former fellow-townsmen all were eager, perhaps with a touch of jealousy and incredulity, to see for themselves what He had become.

On the Sabbath-day He entered the synagogue, where for many years it had been His wont to worship. Supposing it to be of the ordinary type, it was a rectangular flat-roofed stone building, with sculptured symbolic representations on the lintels over the doors. Two double colonnades ran down the interior, and at the northern end rose a gallery for the women. In the centre stood the lectern of the reader upon an elevated place or *bema*, and at the southern end was the 'ark,' a chest of painted wood containing the book of the Law. With their back to the ark were the seats for the elders, of whom the chief was called the ruler of the synagogue. The 'minister,' or clerk, who often acted as schoolmaster, and who was responsible for the charge of the sacred books and various details of worship, was lower in rank than these officials, but was always selected with the greatest care that he should be of good character.

There were no ordained ministers in our sense of the term to conduct the service, and on this special Sabbath Jesus had been asked by the ruler of the synagogue to

officiate. We may imagine the curiosity with which the eyes of the townsfolk were turned upon Him as He stepped upon the elevated *bema* in the midst of them. After the prayers, the minister handed Him the roll of the Prophet Isaiah, and, either intentionally or because it was the appointed lesson for the day, He opened it at the sixty-first chapter, and read as follows:—

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
> Because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor.
> He hath sent Me to proclaim release to the captives,
> And recovering of sight to the blind,
> To set at liberty them that are bruised,
> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Probably He read it in the original Hebrew, which had become a dead language, translating it into Aramaic (the dialect then spoken throughout Palestine), that all the people might understand. After uttering the gracious words, 'to preach the acceptable year of the Lord,' He paused, omitting the concluding phrase, 'the day of vengeance of our God'; then rolled up the book, gave it to the clerk, and sat down.

There was breathless silence as He thus assumed the usual position of a Jewish preacher. And greater grew the attention of the audience, followed by amazement, as He declared unto them that the Scripture (which originally referred to the year of Jubilee, Lev. xxv. 8–10) was that day fulfilled in His own person. He had come with heavenly good tidings to the poor, and merciful relief to the sick and oppressed. So gracious were His words that His listeners at first were spell-bound by the charm. But in a little while their rapt

attention began to give way to indignant amazement. 'Who is this?' they asked. 'Is He not the son of Joseph the carpenter? What is the meaning, then, of these presumptuous assertions?'

Jesus saw with sadness the gathering storm of unbelief, and perceived that the people were determined not to listen to His words unless He supported them by some miracle. It did not suit His purpose to meet the requirements of such vulgar lack of comprehension, and He proceeded to show them that their rejection of Him was only paralleled by their treatment of other prophets in their own country. The miracles of Elijah and Elisha, whose special work lay in this very region of Galilee, had been turned aside by the cold incredulity of the inhabitants, and were performed for the benefit of Gentiles, not of Jews. 'Therefore,' He seems to say, 'it is not wonderful that you reject Me, nor is it wonderful that I work no miracle for your special benefit.'

They were filled with wrath at thus being put upon a level with Gentiles. Offence at His claims, wounded pride, mingled with pricks of conscience arising from the gracious words they had at first received, made them wild to justify themselves by some open act of fury. They rose in a body, dragged Him from the synagogue, and pressed Him to the brow of the hill on which the town is built, with the idea of crowding Him over the brink of the cliff.[1] Thus the first attempt

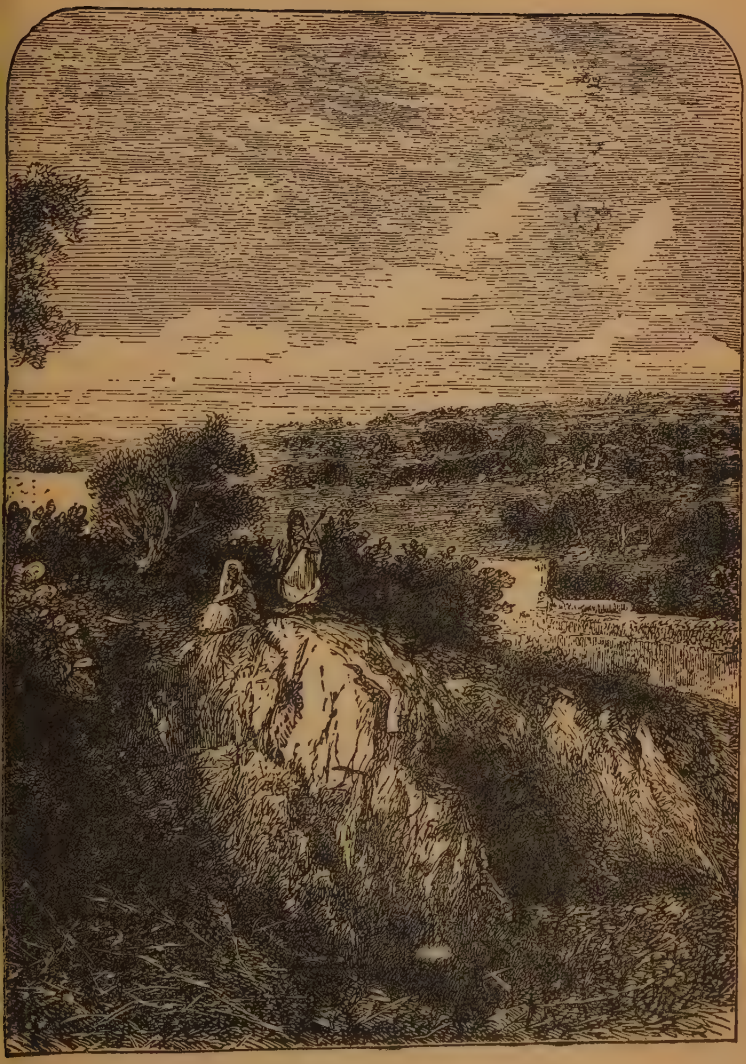
[1] Such a cliff as is here indicated rises abruptly about forty feet out of the valley at the western angle of the hill on which Nazareth stands, just above the Maronite church.

upon the life of our Lord came from the very people who ought to have known Him best.

But it was not successful. Jesus, understanding their intent, turned and passed 'through the midst of them,' awing them by the calm majesty of His demeanor, which made them afraid and ashamed to carry out their mad purpose to the end, and which on other occasions abashed His enemies.

So the Saviour was rejected by His own acquaintance and fellow-townsfolk. It must have been in mournfulness that he left the familiar scene for Capernaum, the place that was henceforth to be known as 'His own city.' Here loyal hearts awaited Him, for His disciples Andrew, Peter, Philip, and John had their home in the village of Bethsaida, close by. Engaged in their original trade of fishing, which had been interrupted by their visit with Him to Judæa, they were anticipating His return.

The fame of Jesus had gone before Him, and when He entered the populous region, the 'manufacturing district' of the country, He was joyfully welcomed by the inhabitants. This part of His ministry, which has been called the 'Galilean spring,' stands out in bright contrast to the rest, for, says St. Luke, 'The multitude pressed upon Him and heard the word of God.' It was the early spring-time, when all around the lake nature was reviving in fresh beauty; the olives, oleanders, palms, and fig-trees were putting forth their leaves; wild flowers were adorning the fields of Gennesareth in countless profusion; the birds filled the air with song; and the brooks, after the winter rain, dashed in full



THE CLIFF NEAR NAZARETH.

torrents down the hill-sides to the inland sea. Jesus loved to walk among all this freshness and beauty; and one day, shortly after His return, He was treading the beach of firm white sand near Bethsaida, followed as usual by a gathering crowd. Drawn upon the shore were two large fishing-boats, belonging, the one to Simon and Andrew, the other to James and John, and Zebedee their father. The latter, with some hired men, were sitting in their boat mending their nets, while Simon and Andrew were washing theirs on the beach. They had spent an unsuccessful night of fishing, and had taken nothing, so were now preparing for the next night's toil by getting their implements ready. The multitude were pressing upon Jesus, so He beckoned to Simon to take Him into his boat and push off a little from the land. He sat down, as was usual with religious instructors in those days; and while the eager listeners crowded up to the water's edge, He taught them from this safe and pleasant pulpit. All places were suited for Him, the Heavenly Teacher, to use for His sermons. The mountain, the shore, the field, were as sacred to Him as the precincts of the synagogue.

The discourse was over; the people began to depart; but Jesus, as soon as He had done speaking, thought of His poor disappointed friends, who had spent a night of useless toil, and bade Simon push out the boat into deep water, to let down the nets for a draught. Simon replied in astonishment, 'Master (i. e. Teacher[1]), we

[1] This word (Ἐπιστάτα) is peculiar to St. Luke, and only occurs Luke v. 5; viii. 24, 45; ix. 33, 49; xvii. 13.

toiled all night and took nothing; but at Thy command I will let down the nets.' Night was the usual time for fishing, and Simon could scarcely believe that after ill success then, they should take any spoil in the daytime; but he was willing to trust his Master. He and Andrew accordingly obeyed, and had no sooner done so than their net was invaded by a shoal of fishes. So great was the strain on the meshes, that they beckoned to their partners on land to come and help them in the other boat. Zebedee, his sons and servants came, but the haul was so enormous that both boats were filled, and were weighed down in the water by the load. When the pressure of work was over, the whole force of the miracle flashed upon Peter's mind. It was not the first he had seen, but it came home to him with greater power because it had to do with his own calling. Suddenly overcome with a sense of his own unworthiness in the presence of such gentleness and might, he could but exclaim, sinking at his Master's feet, 'Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' [1]

Jesus reassured him with the memorable words that

[1] This description is taken from the combined history of Matt. iv. 18–22, Mark i. 16–20, Luke v. 1–11. Some suppose that the latter is a separate occurrence, judging from the differences that appear. It seems, however, difficult to believe that Jesus called the disciples twice with the same promise, and the varieties in detail are comparatively slight. Luke dwells more particularly upon the former part of the incident; Matthew and Mark omit facts that he relates, but give the latter part with more detail. So Dr. Robinson, Dr. Edersheim, and Canon Farrar; but for a different view see Alford's New Testament.

FLOWERS FROM THE SHORE OF THE LAKE OF GENESARETH.

form his definite call to apostleship: 'Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.'[1]

The same invitation to 'become fishers of men' is extended to the three companions, of whom two—John and Andrew—had already, like Simon Peter, heard the call of Jesus to follow and learn of Him; but this was a summons of more significance, to work with Him throughout their lives. Strong and ardent must have been the tie of attachment that already bound them to the Master, for without a question or a stipulation they 'forsook all and followed Him.'

[1] ἔσῃ ζωγῶν; the word implies to *take alive*, and is also used in 2 Tim. ii. 26. Socrates uses the same metaphor (*Xen. Mem.* ii. 6): 'Try to be good, and to catch the good. I will help you, for I know the art of catching men.'

CHAPTER XIII.

DEEDS OF MERCY IN CAPERNAUM.

THERE was one memorable Sabbath-day spent by Jesus in Capernaum which we may take as the type of other days occupied in doing good that are not so fully described. In the morning He went into the synagogue [1] and taught. How different was His sermon from the weary discourses without life and power which the people were accustomed to hear in stolid apathy! Long discussions on trifling points of ceremony, supported by the authority of Rabbi after Rabbi, were now superseded by 'thoughts that breathe and words that burn,' fired with Divine enthusiasm. While the audience where hanging on His lips, a poor creature, in whom an unclean spirit was supposed to dwell,[2] interrupted Him with loud cries, recognizing

[1] The site of Capernaum has been lost; but if it be, as is usually supposed by travellers, identical with Tell Hûm, the ruins probably of this very synagogue are still seen upon a little eminence above the lake.

[2] The whole question of the possession with evil spirits is a very difficult one. It is certain that the Jews referred all cases of epilepsy and madness to the direct action of demons; but the 'possession,' which was a common and frightful disease at the time, was something more than these, in which the wretched sufferer felt himself driven

Him as the 'Holy one of God,' yet raving in terror and in hatred.

With His own calm majesty Jesus chid the evil influence that possessed the wretched sufferer. Falling to the ground, the demoniac was the victim of a dreadful struggle; but it was soon over, and he arose serene and composed. The people were astonished, and gave full vent to their amazement at the new and wonderful teaching which had power over these unseen forces of evil. And far and wide spread the fame of Jesus after that Sabbath morning service.

From the synagogue Jesus went with Simon Peter, James and John, to the house of Simon's mother-in-law. The poor woman had been struck down with one of the sudden fevers that are even now common in the district, and they begged Him to heal her. At once He went to the bedside, rebuked the disease, took her by the hand and raised her up. Health was restored, and she employed her newly-recovered strength in ministering to the Healer and His disciples.

After the midday meal, prepared by the grateful hostess, Jesus had a little time for rest. At sunset the Jewish Sabbath was over, and as soon as the inhabitants could act with freedom from the rigid rules of Sabbath observance, they all came crowding together at the

onward, by a force stronger than himself, to deeds of savage destruction. Without trying to solve the question, we may point out that, in common with every other disturbance of man's nature, and in a more striking degree than most, this disorder arises from *sin*, and may therefore be rightly ascribed to the power of evil abroad in the world. The Evangelist and Jesus Himself would naturally use the current language of the time in dealing with such cases.

doors of His house. The two miracles of the day had stirred public curiosity and eagerness to an intense pitch of excitement, and all those who were ill, or possessed with unclean spirits, were brought to seek relief from the merciful Lord. In the twilight He moved among them, shedding health and strength from His benignant touch, calming with a word the agitated raving of the demoniacs, who wildly testified to His Divinity. One who as an inhabitant of Capernaum probably witnessed the scene reminds us, that so He fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah, quoted by the Evangelist with a slight variation of words: 'Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.'

The scene forms the keynote of a well-known and beautiful hymn:

> At even, ere the sun was set,
> The sick, O Lord, around Thee lay.
> O in what divers pains they met!
> O with what joy they went away!

And He is still ready to shed His healing influence upon the hearts of all who approach Him by faith.

This Sabbath-day had been full of activity, and Jesus might well feel that His human frame needed rest after its busy hours. But He rose the next morning, 'a great while before day,' and departed into a lonely place, perhaps some ravine that cleft the hillside, or a solitary height above the Plain of Gennesareth, where He poured out His soul in communion with God. The day was not many hours old before Peter, who was always impulsive and foremost in action came to hunt[1] for Him,

[1] Greek, *κατεδίωξαν*; literally, tracked or hunted him down. Mark i. 36.

with the tidings that popular excitement was still at its height and all men were seeking him out. But Jesus did not intend to pass all His time in one place, nor to lavish His miraculous power unduly; therefore He bade His disciples follow Him to other country towns in the neighborhood to preach the Kingdom of God there also.

One incident only of this journey is recorded. Jesus was walking in a village of Galilee, when he saw a man in the worst stage of the horrible disease of leprosy. With bare head, rent clothes, and covered lip the miserable creature was considered by his fellows as a man already dead; yet, although past all human aid, he resolved to fling himself on the compassion of the new Prophet concerning whom he heard such wonderful rumors. Kneeling on the ground, and then in an agony of supplication flinging himself on his face, he cried, 'Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean.' Great was his faith, for there was but one instance in all Jewish history of a leper miraculously healed.[1] Without any hesitation Jesus put forth His hand and touched the poor sufferer. By so doing He broke the letter of the ceremonial law which declared that the touch of a leper was pollution, but He acted in accordance with the older and nobler law of compassion.

At once the leper felt the glow of health returning, while his skin became pure and soft once more. Jesus bade him go directly to the priest to show himself and make the usual offerings on his recovery, but he was to tell no one who had worked the cure. Perhaps this was

[1] Kings v.

for the reason that, if the priests heard so strange a story, they would make a difficulty about granting the certificate of health, without which the restored leper could not associate with his fellow-men; perhaps also because Jesus was strongly averse to be regarded as a mere worker of wonders. He did not perform miracles for the sake of kindling curiosity and chatter, and was always on His guard lest people should regard them more than His teaching.[1] Perhaps, also, in the cases where He enjoined secrecy, He saw that the solemn effects of God's mercy on the heart might be endangered by the love of creating a sensation in proclaiming the benefits received. However this may be, the leper was too full of joy and excitement to keep the secret; he published it abroad in all directions, and Jesus was beset by increasing multitudes. He withdrew from the thickly peopled district, and sought the lonely hillsides for a few days; but even here the crowds followed Him. St. Luke, who refers more than the other Evangelists to the private prayers of Jesus, tells us that He passed some of this time in communion with God; and He must have needed heavenly refreshment and strength for the increasing stress of His work.

After this circuit through the various towns and villages, Jesus returned to Capernaum, where the inhabitants were still constantly talking about Him. He had probably been absent only two or three weeks; meanwhile Pharisees and doctors of the law had come even from Jerusalem to find out the truth of the reports that

[1] Compare Matt. xii. 16; Mark v. 43

were flying through the land.[1] Ever since His bold act in cleansing the Temple nearly a year ago their reluctant attention had been drawn to Him, first by His preaching in the neighborhood of Jerusalem and on the Jordan, then by the news of the enthusiasm He was creating in the North. So when the tidings spread that Jesus had returned to a house in Capernaum, such a crowd pressed in to hear Him, of these dignitaries from Jerusalem and visitors from all parts of the country, that there was not room for any more to stand, even round the outside of the doorway. In the better dwellings of the middle classes a covered gallery ran round the courtyard. Into this gallery opened the doors of the different rooms, and here very probably Jesus was standing, discoursing to the crowds that filled the rooms and the courtyard, which was thronged with listeners even out into the street.

Among those who had come was a man helpless from paralysis, carried on a mattress by four friends. There was no way through the packed audience for them to get to Jesus; but so determined were they to bring their burden to the feet of the merciful Master that they carried him to the top of the house, perhaps by the outer staircase which was usually found in Jewish dwellings, and removed some of the tiles of the gallery roof. They then let down the sick man exactly in front of the place where Jesus was sitting.[2]

[1] It must be remembered that the whole extent of the country was only 180 miles, and the breadth rarely more than 50, so news could travel rapidly from Galilee to Judæa.

[2] The details are too vague to make us see exactly what was done,

He approved the faith and energy which led to this new way of entering His presence, and said to the paralytic, who was perhaps abashed at finding himself the observed of all observers:

'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.'

The Pharisees were astonished at this speech. 'Who can forgive sins but God alone?' they questioned in their hearts. Jesus read their thoughts and said to them:

'Is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven, or to say 'Arise and walk?'

He implied that any one could *say*, 'Thy sins are forgiven,' and no one would know whether it were true; but no one could say, 'Arise and walk,' to a helpless cripple without showing whether he had or had not the ability to enforce his words by miraculous power. And that it might be proved that He had power to say the first with truth, He would say the latter with visible results.

'That ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins,' He continued, 'I say unto thee (looking at the sufferer), Arise, take up thy bed and walk.'

Instantly strength returned to the palsied limbs. The man—doubly happy in his spiritual and physical cure—rolled up his pallet and walked out before the whole company, who divided to let him pass through in unspeakable amazement. Well might they glorify God and exclaim, 'We have seen strange things to-day!'

but it is a frequent operation to make a hole in the roof in the East. See Thomson's *The Land and the Book*, p. 358.

Again Jesus repaired to the shores of the lake, and taught the multitude out of doors. Among those who heard His words, and doubtless saw many of His miracles, was a man named Levi, afterwards called Matthew. He had an occupation which more than any other was detested among the Jews—that of tax-gatherer, or custom-house officer.[1] His special work was to collect tolls from the fisheries on the Sea of Galilee, and possibly from the merchants who were travelling along the high road to Damascus. When it is remembered that these tolls were for the benefit of the Romans, whom the Jews hated, and that the way in which they were enforced caused great delay, annoyance, and unfair loss to travellers, it will be easy to understand that the collector was regarded as a traitor to his country. Jesus was one day passing the toll-house where Matthew sat to receive the dues. The 'publican,'

[1] The publicans of the New Testament must not be confounded with the *publicani*, or rich Roman knights, to whom the Senate transferred the taxes and custom-dues of the provinces in consideration of their paying a fixed sum into the public treasury. These *publicani* appointed managers, under whom were the actual tax-collectors and custom-house officers (*portitores*), the publicans of the New Testament. They were brought into daily contact with the people, and incurred just hatred from their exactions. It was their business to assess the value of the bales of goods which passed through their hands, and they did it with little regard to fairness. In every way they were encouraged to exact more than was honest, to lay charges of smuggling, in the hope of being bribed to hold their tongues, and to give scope to the worst features of the Jewish character. The same system of farming taxes has wrought desolation and oppression through the Ottoman Empire. In the case of the Jews it was especially irksome, through their fierce national hatred of taxation as an offence against the theocratic idea.

knowing that he was counted among the lowest dregs of the population, scarcely dared to hope for notice from the eminent Teacher as He went by. But Jesus looked with other eyes than ours upon mankind, and saw in this despised publican the future Evangelist and Apostle. 'Follow Me,' He said, and Matthew at once obeyed the gracious call.

CHAPTER XIV.

SABBATH CONTROVERSIES.

IF the conjecture is correct that Jesus returned into Galilee four months before the harvest, i.e. about January, the events related in the last chapter must have occupied about a quarter of a year; for April had now come, and He was to change the scene of His labors for a little while by a visit to Jerusalem on the occasion of the Passover.[1] With

[1] John v. 1. 'After these things there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.' There has been a vast amount of discussion as to whether this unnamed feast was or was not the Passover, and upon this point depends the reckoning of the chronology of Christ's ministry in great measure. The arguments upon which the view here adopted is founded are briefly the following: The most ancient interpretation is that the Passover was meant; it was scarcely probable that Jesus would go from Galilee to Jerusalem to attend a less important feast; and the close connection of the statements seems to show clearly that the feast was His reason for going. If it was the Passover, we have *four* distinctly mentioned (John ii. 13; v. 1, vi. 4, xi. 55), giving a little more than three years, for which we have evidence on other grounds, as the duration of the ministry of Jesus. The only reasons against this supposition are (1) that the definite article is omitted, which, it is said, would have been inserted if this had been the chief feast. Many ancient authorities, however, read, 'the feast' (R. V. margin), and even if this reading be rejected, the Greek ἦν ἑορτή is not so vague as the translation 'there was a feast';

the caravans of Galilean pilgrims He took the familiar journey southwards, and once more entered the city.

Close to the Sheep Gate [1] in Jerusalem, which was probably the entrance by which the flocks came in for the Temple sacrifices, was a pool of water, with a covered portico, divided into five partitions, running along its side. The place was called Bethesda, or House of Mercy, and here lay a sad company of weak and crippled folk, who seemed much in need of the 'mercy' implied in the name of their shelter. Why were they waiting thus on the brink? There was a belief that at certain seasons, when the water was 'troubled,' either by the sudden impregnation with certain gases from the earth, or by the spring bubbling up afresh after periodical inter-

rather might it be rendered 'it was feast-time.' Besides, this is a very rigid mode of criticism, which can scarcely be admitted as conclusive. Again (2) there is another Passover mentioned in John vi. 4, and it is objected that, if John vi. applies to a Passover, a whole year passes unnoticed by John. But it was not his purpose to record the Galilean ministry. It is much more easy to suppose that he only records one or two incidents out of a year of work, than to believe that all the events which we know to have occurred before the Passover of John vi. 4 (the execution of John the Baptist; the return of the Twelve; the feeding of the Five Thousand, etc.) took place in addition to all that has been already described as occurring after the Passover of ii. 13, within twelve months. Far too much labor is thus compressed into one single year. A Passover about this time is implied by the disciples rubbing ripe corn in their hands (Matt. xii. 1; Mark ii. 23; Luke vi. 1), and it is the easiest and most probable explanation to regard it as 'the feast' of John v. 1. Those who take a different view suppose it to have been the 'Feast of Purim,' a national festival, which would scarcely bring Jesus from Galilee. The Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Pentecost have also been suggested.

[1] Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39.

mission, the healing virtue of the pool was increased.[1] Probably it was mineral water, which was then, as it is now, considered a great remedy for the weakness resulting from disease.[2]

In one of the divisions of this colonnade a poor man was lying on his little mat with a sad pathetic look in his face. For thirty-eight years he had been thus helpless; doubtless from paralysis in the limbs. Friends had brought him, perhaps not very long ago, to the brink of the pool, and left him there to wait for the right season when the water became 'troubled.' 'But what is the use of it?' he was thinking. 'I am too crippled to drag myself to the edge, and another man snatches the right moment by stepping in just before my face. I may as well be carried back again and give up this forlorn hope of cure.'

He hears a step; some one stands beside him, and he looks up, hoping perhaps that the stranger will carry him to the water. It is a kind and beautiful face that now bends over him, with an expression of mingled majesty and gentleness such as the man has never seen before. 'Wilt thou be made whole?' He asks. Why, all the poor cripple's nature is one eager, well-nigh despairing thirst for cure. He instantly begins to tell his

[1] There was a popular saying that an angel went down into the pool and troubled the water every now and then; but the admission of this statement into St. John's account has long been considered an interpolation, and is omitted from the text of the Revised Version.

[2] The blindness that was thought to receive benefit was of course the result of disease; some form of the ophthalmia that is so common in the East.

pitiful case to the sympathizing questioner; but the rejoinder is different far from his expectation:

'Arise, take up thy bed, and walk!'

At the same moment a new power steals through the withered limbs; the man feels able to obey the strange command! He rises to his feet, rolls up the mat with ease, and is strong and well in a moment; but his merciful Healer has slipped away among the crowd from his rapturous thanks and exclamations.

This cure was wrought on the Sabbath, and as the joyful patient walked away with his mat rolled up under his arm he was stopped by some of the Jews, who took him to task for breaking the sanctity of the day by carrying a burden. He defended himself by quoting the words of his unknown Friend, whose name they demanded in vain. Afterwards Jesus met him in the Temple, whither he had probably gone to give thanks for his recovery, and warned him to sin no more, lest he incurred worse trouble than bodily infirmity.

The man was now able to tell the Pharisees who it was that had cured him, supposing that they would honor and admire Jesus for the deed. But, instead of this, they accused Him because He had broken the Sabbath in their eyes! The merciful act was, in their judgment, of less value than the punctilious observance of their self-imposed regulations!

Jesus had a simple answer to give them, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.'

The ground for the excessive observance of the Sabbath[1] by the Jews was their belief that God 'rested'

[1] The keeping of the Sabbath, which lasted from sunset on Friday

on the seventh day, after the work of creation, as if it were ended. Jesus, however, pointed out that the Almighty is ever carrying on His merciful activity. The sun rises, nature grows into new forms of beauty, men 'live and move and have their being' through His unceasing care. And He, the Son of God, has equal right to carry on His work of love.

This answer only increased the rage of the Jews, and they cited Him before some committee of the Sanhedrin that He might answer both for His words, which they considered blasphemy, and for His supposed infringement of the Sabbath. The religious dignitaries of the people sought to crush Him by the weight of their authority, but with fearless eye and lofty bearing He asserted His own. In the plainest terms He declared that the Father would show greater works than the revival of physical life in the helpless limbs of a cripple; even the infusion of spiritual life into the morally dead humanity of the world, for which He was sent. Those

to sunset on Saturday, had grown to be the observance of an endless code of the most minute and petty details, largely evaded by hypocritical devices. For instance, a Sabbath-day's journey must only be 2,000 cubits (just over half a mile); but those who wished to go farther placed on the preceding day, small portions of food on the way they were to take 2,000 cubits apart. The spot where they ate food was assumed to be their dwelling-place; and thus each stage of the distance was invested with the false character of a separate journey! The law as to bearing burdens was a perversion of Jer. xvii. 21, and was carried to such a degree that, did a hair fall upon a man's robe, he was said to have broken the Sabbath by carrying it. The length of the knot that might be tied on the Sabbath was regulated; and countless other restrictions of an equally trivial and vexatious character interfered with rational freedom.

who refused to honor Him were thereby dishonoring the Father whose representative He was. As witnesses to His Divine mission He pointed them to John, to Moses—whose followers they boasted themselves to be—to the voice of God in their hearts. Had they known Him, they would have recognized that Jesus bore His message; but despite all their searching of the Scriptures they had brought away only an excessive care for the letter of the law; no sense of the Divine. 'I know you, that ye have not the love of God in yourselves,' were the words of Jesus. And how bitter they must have been to the proud Scribes and Pharisees!

God had manifested Himself, if they would but choose to see, in all their past history, and was ready to reveal Himself to their spirits; but they were obstinately deaf and blind. Their God was a God who cared much about little things—the breadth of a phylactery, the tying aright of a knot! The God whom their fathers had trusted and whom Jesus came to make fully known was another Being altogether, pleased not by outward ceremonies, but by righteouness, mercy, and truth.

We shall understand this better by looking into this very question of the Sabbath. The original strictness of the law respecting its observance had but one end—the relief of the heavy laden and weary, the poor and oppressed, by the enforced institution of one day of rest. How utterly this spirit was lost sight of, in the mere letter of the commands, is shown by the objection of the Pharisees to an act of healing done in the very same spirit of mercy that had dictated the establishment of the Sabbath-day!

This was the beginning of a steady course of opposition to Jesus manifested by the upper and governing class of the community. They felt that it must be war to the death with this new Teacher, who was creating popular enthusiasm in the country; whose influence had been exerted in and near Jerusalem in the past year until they must perforce notice Him. They believed that they, and none other, had the very Word of God in the law and the traditions. For any revelation outside this barren letter, for any new conception of God, they had no room. Obedience, first, to the law itself, secondly to the endless definitions and prescriptions attached and handed down by Rabbi after Rabbi, was their religious ideal, and woe be to him who decried it.

Jesus was aware of the enmity He had enkindled, which went so far as to wish to attack His life; but, as yet, the Pharisees could find no open reason for arraigning Him. However, the hostility and opposition raised were so great that He withdrew from Jerusalem, never, so far as we know, to return until six months before His death.

The question of Sabbath-keeping was soon to be revived. On the way from Jerusalem into Galilee, Jesus and His disciples passed one Sabbath-day [1] through the cornfields, ripe with standing wheat. As they went,

[1] St. Luke calls it the 'second-first Sabbath,' ἐν σαββάτῳ δευτεροπρώτῳ. This probably means the first Sabbath after the second day of unleavened bread, from which Sabbaths were counted to the Pentecost; or it may have been the first Sabbath of the second month. But the reading is questioned. See Revised Version.

the disciples, who were hungry, plucked the ears of corn and rubbed them in their hands to eat the grain.[1] Some of the Pharisees, who were perhaps following Him, with the occurrence of the pool of Bethesda fresh in their minds, expostulated that they were doing what was not lawful on the Sabbath-day. The way in which they argued was that, since reaping and threshing corn were forbidden on the Sabbath, to gather corn was unlawful as a sort of reaping; to rub it for the purpose of extracting the grain was a sort of threshing. Thus ran the rules drawn up by Rabbinical authority.

Jesus did not enter into any argument on the far-fetched nature of this restriction, but referred them to an authority whom they would be ready to acknowledge —their great ancestor David. He had broken the canonical law in case of need by eating the sacred bread from the Temple when he could obtain no other; and Jesus pointed out that, as the observances were created for human needs, human needs were greater than the observances: 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath;' while He, in His capacity as representative of the whole human race, was greater than the rules of the Temple, Lord also of the Sabbath-day.

The Pharisees needed the old lesson, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' in their slavish adherence to the *letter*, their disregard of the *spirit*; and their keeping of the Sabbath was the most prominent instance of their whole point of view. Tradition, ceremony, out-

[1] Deut. xxiii. 25. The plucking of ears in passing through a neighbor's fields was lawful, so long as a sickle was not used.

ward observance—these formed the whole of their religion. Judaism was a lifeless form; Christ's religion, on the contrary, was a living spirit. Outward conduct was to be animated *from within*, and was valuable only in so far as it rightly embodied gentleness, goodness, truth, and love.

CHAPTER XV.

FURTHER OPPOSITION—CHOICE OF THE TWELVE.

AFTER the visit to Jerusalem described in the last chapter, Scribes and Pharisees seem to have followed Jesus to Galilee. Their suspicions were aroused, their enmity excited; they knew He was not a mere obscure fanatic to be ignored or summarily put down, for against their will they recognized the power of His words. Yet one thing was clear, that His teaching was utterly different from their own; and another fact was plain, that people were everywhere talking about Him, and reports were flying all over the land about His wonderful doings. The Galileans were an excitable race, easily stirred up to tumult. The leaders of the people in Jerusalem felt anxious as to the result of their enthusiasm for Jesus; perhaps they might be incited to resist the authority of the Sanhedrin or to burst out in some strange religious revolution. At any rate, a watch must be kept upon heresy, and accordingly a deputation from the Scribes and Pharisees dogged the steps of the Saviour. From this time they are continually appearing on the scene

of His life, where hitherto gratitude and loving reverence have most frequently been manifested.

Jesus went back to 'His own city,' Capernaum. One Sabbath-day, shortly after His return, He was in the synagogue, either to read the prayers or to teach, when He perceived a man with a withered hand.[1] Probably the sufferer had come with the express view of seeking a cure from Jesus, for the spies, who were sitting by, seemed to know his purpose, and were on the alert. Full of this daring innovator's treatment of the Sabbath-day, they were watching to see if He would 'break' it, as He had lately done at Jerusalem, by a miracle of healing. They were not long left in doubt.

'Stand forth!' said Jesus, addressing the man with the withered hand. Then, knowing perfectly well the ignorant blind prejudice that was raising a protest in the hearts of these Jews, He asked them:

'Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to destroy it?'

Such a question did not come within the scope of their benighted minds. Had He asked them whether it were lawful to carry a needle about or not, they could have told Him at once. But the larger question they left untouched in their zeal for these miserable trifles. So they 'held their peace.' Jesus again addressed them, reminding them that if a sheep fell into a water-pit on the Sabbath they would rescue it from drowning by

[1] In one of the Apocryphal Gospels (of the Nazarenes and Ebionites) the tradition is preserved that he was a stonemason, who was maimed by an accident, and had implored Jesus to cure him that he might not have to beg.

pulling it out. Was not a man better than a sheep? Still silence; and Jesus looked round upon them with indignation,[1] because of their fierce formalism and hardness of heart.

'Stretch forth thy hand!' were the next words that rang from His lips. The man obeyed, for, as the Healer spoke, the hand had remained withered no longer.

Did not the Pharisees rejoice, in spite of themselves, at this signal act of mercy? Surely the instincts of humanity must have been too strong for them, and they must have sympathized with the sufferer who was cured! Not so; for it is a difficult thing to touch hearts hardened by religious fanaticism. They went out, and being 'filled with madness'[2] consulted together with the Herodians[3] what they might do to this bold Galilean teacher who defied their authority—*theirs*, the guides and leaders of the people, skilled in the law, of high repute in the sacred precincts of the Temple. They openly expressed to each other their wish for His death, and Jesus, knowing this, withdrew to a more retired spot on the borders of the lake.

[1] Mark iii. 5 This Evangelist, who is supposed to have written his Gospel under the direct superintendence of Peter, frequently preserves in detail the very changes in the look and tone of Jesus. Doubtless he owes these minute touches to the loving watchfulness of the elder disciple. For remarks on the origin of the Gospel of Mark, see *The Apostle Peter, his Life and Letters*, by Dr. Green.

[2] Luke vi. 11. ἄνοια, senselessness, a blind fury.

[3] The Herodians were the partisans of Herod the Great and his successors, and were rather a political than a religious sect. As Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee, and Jesus lived chiefly in his dominions, it was a good thing for the Pharisees to enlist the supporters of the ruler against Him.

But He could not be hidden from those who loved His presence, and a great multitude followed Him from all parts of the country. So vast, indeed, was the crowd that pressed upon Him that He bade His disciples attend Him with a little boat, lest He should be

THE SEA OF GALILEE.

thronged overmuch; but meanwhile He healed all those who had need of Him.

The period had now arrived when Jesus wished to gather into a definite company, with some additions to their number, the disciples who had been called by Him from time to time; and when these twelve were

appointed He had it in His purpose to deliver to them a statement of the true nature of His kingdom. This was an important element in His life-work, and in preparation for it He went forth to seek a night of communion with His father.

At the back of the level plain of Gennesareth stands a hill called Kurn Hattin, or Horns of Hattin. Out of a broad platform-like top spring two peaks, from which the hill derives its name; the village of Hattin nestles on the ridge at its base, and a wild gorge called Wâdy Hamâm, or Valley of Doves, leads from the foot of the hill down to the plain beside the lake. Up this ravine, in all probability, our Lord wandered one summer evening beside the clear stream that rushes down to the Sea of Galilee, and on one of the higher peaks of Kurn Hattin He spent the night in prayer.[1]

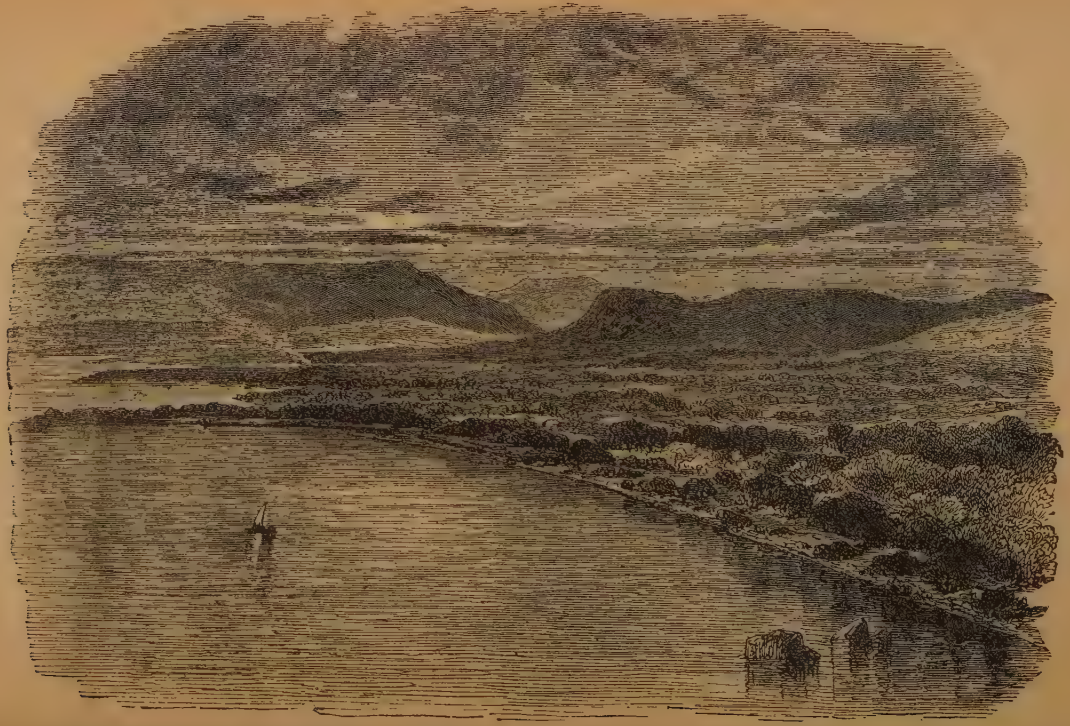
At daybreak His disciples came to Him, together with others who had during His Galilean ministry frequented His presence and hung upon His words. From these He chose twelve, including those disciples who were already faithfully bound to Him. Their names were as follows:[2]

Simon Peter.

Andrew, his brother.

[1] For the identification of Kurn Hattin with the Mount of Beatitudes, see Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 368. He points out that from its central position, the level space (Luke vi. 17, τόπου πεδινοῦ) below its higher horns, its nearness to the lake, its separation as 'the mountain' from the chain of hills around, it may be almost with absolute certainty regarded as the site of the Sermon on the Mount.

[2] The lists given by the three Evangelists and in the Acts (Matt. x.: Mark iii.; Luke vi.; Acts i. 13) are each divided into three sets of



LAKE OF GALILEE AND KURN HATTIN.

James, the son of Zebedee.
John, his brother.
Philip.
Bartholomew, or rather Nathanael Bar-Tolmai.
Thomas.
Matthew, or Levi.
James, the son of Alphæus.[1]

four each, each containing the same names, and headed alike, as is shown by the accompanying table :-

Matthew	Mark	Luke	Acts
1 Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Peter
2 Andrew	James } Boaner-	Andrew	James
3 James	John } ges	James	John
4 John	Andrew	John	Andrew
5 Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
6 Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
7 Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
8 Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
9 James of Alphæus	James of Alphæus	James of Alphæus	James of Alphæus
10 Lebbæus, surnamed Thaddæus	Thaddæus	Simon Zelotes	Simon Zelotes
11 Simon the Canaean	Simon the Canaean	Judas of James	Judas of James
12 Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	—

[1] This James, the son of Alphæus, has been supposed to be identical with James the Lord's brother, but the belief does not seem well founded. The argument chiefly rests on Gal. i. 19; 'Other of the apostles saw I none save James, the Lord's brother.' James the son of Zebedee was dead, and it is suggested that this applies to the son of Alphæus. John xix. 25 is also interpreted to mean that Mary the wife of Alphæus or Clopas, and mother of James, was the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus. Hence 'James the Lord's brother' is supposed to mean James the Lord's cousin, the son of Alphæus. But why should a cousin be called a brother? Is it likely that two sisters would both bear the name Mary? The 'brethren of Christ' did not as yet believe in Him (John vii. 5), and could scarcely be His

Lebbæus,[1] surnamed Thaddæus, or Judas of James.
Simon Zelotes, or the Zealot.[2]
Judas 'Iscariot,' or of Kerioth,[3] a town in Judah.

Of these, John and Peter were undoubtedly the foremost; one, the 'beloved disciple'; the other, the Apostle to the Gentiles in after years, a man of fervent zeal, passionate affection, and loyal heart, though for a brief moment he was led astray. James the son of Zebedee was admitted with these two into the inner circle of our Lord's friends, and was the first to suffer martyrdom for His sake. Of James, son of Alphæus, called in Mark

apostles at this time. Gal. i. 19 is probably an instance (like Matt. xxiv. 36; Luke iv. 26, 27; Rev. xxi. 27) where the words εἰ μή, 'save' or 'except,' mark the separation of things or persons from a class to which they do not belong. If the marginal reading 'but only' be adopted, the meaning of the verse is at once made clear. To regard James the Lord's brother as altogether distinct from the Twelve gives the proper meaning to the word *brother*, explains Jesus being called Mary's *first-born* Son, is consistent with the way His brethren are usually spoken of apart from the Apostles, reconciles John vii. 5 with Acts i. 13, 14, and prevents the difficulty of explaining why, while the apostles were sent forth to teach all nations, James remained at Jerusalem. Acts i. 8; xv. 13, etc.

There were, therefore, three personages of the name of James:

1. James, son of Joseph and Mary, head of the Church in Jerusalem, author of the Epistle of James; not one of the Twelve.
2. James, the son of Zebedee, one of the Twelve.
3. James, son of Alphæus or Clopas and Mary, called James the Little (not *the Less*, Mark xv. 40); one of the Twelve.

[1] Thaddæus—Theudas, the Greek form of Judas. 'Of James' probably means the brother of James, and therefore also son of Alphæus or Clopas. He is generally regarded as identical with Jude, the author of the Epistle.

[2] Not the Canaanite, but Khanan, a Hebrew word meaning zealous, like the Greek form *zelotes*.

[3] Josh. xv. 25.

xv. 40 'the Little,' Lebbæus, and Simon Zelotes we know scarcely anything. The last-named disciple belonged to the sect of the Zealots, who followed Phinehas (Numb. xxv. 7) as their example in taking vengeance with their own hands on offenders against the Law; but he was doubtless won to another state of mind by the 'sweet reasonableness' of Jesus Christ. The glimpses afforded of Philip, Andrew, Nathanael and Matthew are but few; Thomas comes once or twice into prominence as ardent in love to Jesus, yet slow to believe in His resurrection; while Judas Iscariot is notorious for the terrible act of betrayal. He was probably very keen and sagacious about money matters, for he took charge of the funds of the little company and managed their affairs.

Such were the men whom Jesus saw before Him on the hill in the early morning light. None of them were among the learned of the land. Not from the priesthood, the scribes, the rich and powerful did Jesus choose the disciples whose memory was to abide through all time associated with His own, but from the poor and obscure. Laymen and unlearned were they, with scarcely an outward advantage to commend them. Yet these were the men who, through His Spirit, shook the world.

Having chosen the Twelve, whom He also named apostles,[1] and formed them into one company, Jesus descended with them to the grassy plateau beneath the upper heights. A multitude of people had already climbed hither from the plain of Gennesareth, and were

[1] Literally 'sent forth,' from the Greek ἀπό, στέλλω.

awaiting Him in eager expectation. Many of them needed His healing touch, and they were not disappointed; but Jesus had more than this to impart to-day. The time had come for the delivery of a proclamation respecting the kingdom He was to establish. His apostles were chosen definitely, and to them in particular He must explain the nature of His reign, His subjects, His laws,[1] on which they were thirsting for information, and entertaining mistaken ideas. It was a solemn moment; the people were seated in a hush of expectation on the greensward, the disciples formed an inner circle round their Lord. St. Luke says that Jesus 'stood,' but that was before His discourse, when He was engaged in the work of healing. Now, as He was about to begin, He seated Himself, as was his wont, and 'lifting up His eyes upon His disciples,' He addressed, to them in the first instance, but through them to the people, the 'Sermon on the Mount.'

[1] From a comparison of the discourses in Matt. v. and Luke vi. it seems evident that they are reports of the same sermon, with only such differences as are easily accounted for by the difference of the Evangelists, and the fact that the report in Luke is more condensed. This view is taken by Farrar, Geikie, Alford, Ellicott, Westcott, Robinson, Edersheim, and others. St. Luke's account, while it omits much that St. Matthew introduces, contains the following three passages that are absent from Matthew's account:—

The four woes	Luke vi. 24–26
On lending	" 34, 35
The blind leading the blind . .	" 39, 40

(See Matt. xv. 14.)

Many fragments of the sermon are found here and there in Luke's Gospel in other connections, and seem to show that Jesus repeated His weightiest sayings.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

ONG years ago the Law had been delivered to the children of Israel on Sinai, while thunder and lightning marked the scene, and the swelling tones of the trumpet rose in solemn refrain. Afterwards, whenever the Law was read in presence of the people, the stern enumeration of commands was followed by the threat—

'Cursed be he that doth not keep the commandments of the law to do them.' And all the people were bidden to say AMEN.

How different was the introduction of the law of the kingdom of Christ! Blessing, not cursing, was the theme of His first utterances. And yet the spirit of the Law given by Moses was also in the teaching of Jesus. Both aimed at righteousness pure and perfect, but furnished different motives from which it was to be attained. Men, under the old dispensation, were impelled to do right largely by fear of punishment; Jesus was to win them to goodness by words of gentleness and love.

Fear cannot change the heart, but love is the strongest of all transforming powers. Jesus came to implant this sentiment in the human nature He would renew, and to show that the heart-obedience dictated by love, not the outward seeming instigated by self-interest, was the duty children owed to their Heavenly Father.

The Sermon on the Mount should be studied thoughtfully in His own words, for no exposition can do more than give a bare and unsatisfactory outline of its rich depth and beauty. Yet the following sketch may prove a help to the earnest student.

Jesus had announced Himself as preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. John the Baptist had uttered the soul-stirring cry, 'Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand!' The people who followed Christ and who heard of His kingdom were hoping that He would follow up His deeds of might and mercy by some external rule. Were not these miracles, these words uttered as 'never man spake,' the prelude to some demonstration of power and majesty which should satisfy the hopes of Israel and place Jesus of Nazareth on a visible throne as the Messiah?

The disciples were willing to trust Jesus as to His mission, yet He did not wish any longer to keep them in ignorance of the true nature of the kingdom He had come to establish; and now He unfolded to them step by step the truth respecting—

i. The Citizens of the kingdom; their character and influence (Matt. v. 1–16).

ii. The new Law which was to regulate their actions (v. 17–48).

iii. The new Life they were to lead; its acts of devotion, its aims, its conduct, its dangers (vi.–vii. 1–23).

iv. The great Contrast between the kingdom and the world outside (vii. 24–27).[1]

It must have been a revelation to the disciples to hear that the preparation for citizenship consisted alone in preparation of the *heart*. Not those who were rich in this world's goods or in deeds of legal righteousness were to possess the kingdom, but the poor in spirit, mourners, the meek, those who hungered and thirsted for righteousness. The first four Beatitudes have special reference to this condition of longing after the Divine; the latter deal rather with that state when the longing has been satisfied, and the merciful, pure, peace-loving, and persecuted manifest the grace they have received. For they are to be the 'salt of the earth,' to keep it from the corruption of evil. And as the Great Teacher looked round the landscape, His eye would perhaps fall on a city where one stands now,[2] high on a bold spur of the Galilean Anti-Lebanon, or on the village and fortress of Tabor in the distance. Either or both would suggest the illustration that followed, 'A city set on a hill cannot be hid.'

Jesus went on to declare that He had not come to destroy the old law, but rather to fulfil. Nay, where

[1] This arrangement is taken from Prof. Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, Note B, ch. vii.

[2] See Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 429. Safed may be a city of modern date, but probably some fortress was then found on the present site.

THE HULEH LILLY.

that law demanded only external conformity, He required an obedience that should extend to the very thoughts and imaginations of the heart. And He ends the description of His grand ideal with the words:

'Ye therefore shall be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.'

He then proceeds to describe the new life, and shows its difference from the standard that had hitherto satisfied the Jew. Whereas the three duties of alms, prayer, and fasting had hitherto been done in a formal manner to attract attention and admiration, He states that they are in reality matters only between the soul and God. Prayer is to be the utterance of filial love and reverence, recognizing the universal Fatherhood of Jehovah, and speaking in simple trusting words of daily needs and hope. The example He gives is uttered by Christians every day, and is known as the 'Lord's Prayer' throughout Christendom. The true meaning of these religious duties is destroyed by ostentation and publicity. This life of com-

munion with God, in childlike trust and freedom from distracting care, is dwelt upon, and Jesus uses the lily of the field, probably the Huleh lily, that grows wild in this neighborhood, and the birds of the air, as illustrations to point the lesson of the Divine Fatherhood and the folly of human over-anxiety.

With warning and admonition this wonderful sermon ends. Enough had been said to show that He had come to found no earthly kingdom. The realm of which this was the proclamation was purely spiritual; utterly free from all the priestly and legal elements that made up the only religion known to the disciples. The brotherhood of all men, under a common Father in heaven, their duties to Him and to one another, were set before them in a way they had never heard before. Hitherto the Jews had considered it a sort of religious duty to look down upon the Gentiles from their proud height as a chosen nation. Nothing of this exclusiveness was visible in the speech of Jesus. Again, absolute honesty, transparent in thought, word, and deed, was insisted upon as the fundamental virtue: this was something new in a religion where the chief men were continually posing for effect.

Judaism had originally had the aim of promoting righteousness only, but it had been perverted by an adherence to the *letter* which had destroyed the spirit. The Jews were like one who should carefully clean and polish an empty casket when the precious perfume that it contained, and for which alone it was valuable, had long since been spilt.

How could the words of Jesus be fully understood

in such an age as that in which He came? We must not forget that His beautiful life was lived beside His words as a constant illustration and emphasis. Although He had not wherewithal to give alms, He helped the poor in other and better ways. He did not ostensibly fast, but possessed the spiritual exaltation that fasting was supposed to give, while He lived a cheerful and social life, smiling on innocent gaieties and pleasures. He did not pray in public, but won the blessing of prayer by the night-long intercourse with His Father where no eye could see or voice hear His supplication. Hence He won the good of each act of devotion without the outward seeming. And this was in accordance with His teaching throughout, which magnified the religion of the heart, and made light of formal deeds save as they were the outcome of an inner spirit.

It was this life of His that gave power to His words. He moved about among His disciples as an embodiment of His own teaching, and by so doing gave it meaning, force, and immortality.

When He had ended all His sermon the multitude were astonished; for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.[1]

These were not the dull and barren dissertations about the tithing of mint, anise, and cummin, the washing of cups and platters, and a thousand other trifles to

[1] The Scribes, or Sopherim, from Sepher, book, first became a sect in the time of Ezra, when it was their duty to copy and explain the law. In B. C. 300 their occupation was merged into teaching the law only, or, rather, the body of interpretations of the law which accumulated yearly.

which His hearers were accustomed, but they were burning, living words, fresh with Divine enthusiam and bearing on them the stamp of unquestionable authority.

St. Augustine, one of the early Fathers, has well compared the teaching of Jesus to 'a great sea whose smiling surface breaks into refreshing ripples at the feet of our little ones, but into whose unfathomable depths the wisest may gaze with the shudder of amazement and the thrill of love.'

And for more than eighteen centuries all who will bow to the authority, not of priestly interpretation, but of the very words and life of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels, have found it an endless work to study their depth, a daily delight to dwell upon their freshness and beauty. Although He never wrote a line, and moved among men for three brief years only, thousands to-day would die for Him, and their chief happiness rests in the thought of His love and presence. Such is the outcome of His life and death, and of words like these upon the Galilean hills.

CHAPTER XVII.

FURTHER WORK IN GALILEE.

WHEN the Sermon on the Mount was ended, Jesus returned to Capernaum, where the public excitement and eagerness about Him knew no bounds. He entered into a house, but such a crowd besieged Him that He and the disciples had no time even to eat. The news of His wonderful popularity and activity reached His relatives, who appear to have been living close at hand. So little in sympathy were they with Jesus, that they went forth 'to lay hold on Him,' to detain Him forcibly from speaking and working in public, because they thought His enthusiasm a proof of insanity.

We need not wonder very much at this, for a similar thing has frequently happened in the history of the world. Those who are passionately possessed with the fervor of God, whether as preachers, philanthropists, social reformers, or patriots, are looked upon by the cold and selfish bystanders as 'madmen.' Yet it is madness such as theirs which carries on the progress

A ROMAN CENTURION.

of society to something nearer the Divine ideal set up by One who was also said by His friends to be 'beside Himself.'

Jesus was visited very shortly after His return by the chief men or 'elders' of the synagogue,[1] who had a petition to present to Him. In Capernaum there was quartered a small garrison of a hundred Roman soldiers, under the command of a captain or centurion; and this officer had made himself beloved by the Jews among whom he dwelt. He had treated them in a very different manner from that which was usual between members of the ruling and the subject nations, and had actually built them a synagogue, the richly-carved ruins of which may be identified almost with certainty at Tell Hûm after these eighteen hundred years. It was on his account that these elders were approaching Jesus. As a Gentile, the centurion feared that he would have little chance of obtaining from the Teacher the favor which he needed, the restoration to health of a favorite slave who had had a paralytic stroke. The deputation presented the request to Jesus that He should once more put forth His healing might and cure the man; and He, pleased doubtless at the unwonted care for a person belonging to a class treated generally as mere chattels, went with them at once. But while He was on His way, the centurion, hearing that He was approaching, and struck

[1] It does not follow that there was only one synagogue in Capernaum, but that the centurion had built the one from which these elders came. Some commentators regard this miracle as identical with the healing of the courtier's son, but there are too many discrepancies in the accounts to justify the supposition that they em body the same incident.

with the consciousness of his own unworthiness, sent messengers entreating Him not to deign to enter his house, but to put forth a mere word of command, and the servant should be healed. He had doubtless heard of the healing of the courtier's son, and argued in his own mind that if he, an ordinary military man under the authority of his superiors, had soldiers who flew to execute his bidding, so Jesus, if Lord of the forces of the unseen world, could marshal and order them at His pleasure. 'Say the word, and my servant shall be healed.'

Jesus marvelled! Twice only is this declared of Him. Once He marvelled at the unbelief of the Nazarenes, and now at the faith of the centurion. He had found faith in Galilee, but not such faith as the implicit trust of this heathen. And in after years it was to be shown that those who, like the centurion, were outside the pale of the Jewish nation, understood Jesus and His Gospel more readily than His fellow-countrymen. The Roman's faith was not in vain, for the messenger, returning home, found the paralyzed slave restored to health.

Soon afterwards[1] Jesus went from Capernaum to the Plain of Esdraelon,[2] in the south of Galilee, and ascended the rough slopes of Little Hermon, a mountain

[1] The former reading was 'the day after,' Luke vii. 11, but the Revised Version accepts 'about that time.'

[2] Called also the Plain of Jezreel. This is the great battlefield of the Old Testament—see Judges vi., vii.; 1 Sam. xxix., xxxi, etc. The 'Valley of Jezreel' is the central eastern branch of the plain. Only one incident connects our Lord with this historic region.

ridge upon its borders. He was attended by the enthusiastic throng of disciples and followers who always accompanied Him, as He passed from the southern end of the lake down the Jordan valley, whence He probably made His way up one of the ravines to that arm of the plain where Mount Tabor and Little Hermon rise face to face. Nestling on the hillside, full in view of Tabor and the hills of Zebulon, was the village of Nain, whose name, meaning 'fair,' was well deserved for its picturesqueness of situation. But as Jesus and His company climbed the path that led to the gate of the town, the beauty of the scene was marred by a sad procession issuing to meet them, on its way to the burial-ground that even now remains. It was the funeral of a widow's only son. Many people were walking beside the bier,[1] and the Lord's tender heart was touched as He saw the bitter grief of the poor broken-hearted mother.

'Weep not!' He said to her. What stranger could this be who interfered with her natural right to mourn? But her amazement was shortly turned to wonderful, unspeakable gladness. Jesus approached the open bier, and, as the bearers paused in awe, He bade the dead arise.

The young man enveloped in linen folds, sat up and began to speak; while Jesus 'gave him to his mother again,' amidst the fear and wonder, mixed with joy, of all who were present.

Thus the dead owned the power of a single word

[1] It was a statute of the traditional law of the Jews that a funeral procession should be joined and followed to the grave by all the people who encountered it on the road.

from His lips,[1] while Elijah and Elisha of old had only with strong effort achieved like miracles by a special gift of power from God.[2] But the report that went forth declared Him to be a 'great prophet,' in whom God had once again visited His people. All through the country ran the report of this miracle, until it reached Judæa, and was carried even within the walls of the gloomy fortress beside the Dead Sea where John was languishing in his dungeon.

More than a year and a half of confinement had told upon the strong free spirit of the man who had been accustomed to roam in the wild solitudes, and delight in the hills and valleys as his only home. He must have been physically broken down by the sudden change to his young, hardy manhood from the unfettered life in the wilderness to the hideous prison of Herod Antipas. And while in solitude his mind preyed on itself, till he began, not unnaturally, to wonder if he had been the victim of a delusion. Had he, after all, been mistaken in Jesus? He heard of Him, it is true, as exercising great power, yet He would not dwell in the capital, nor put forth any political claims. He did not live an ascetic life like the mighty prophets of old, but was spoken of in hard terms as a lover of social pleasures, consorting with the worst of characters.

It is easier to keep one's faith while fighting actively with suffering and persecution than while lying neg-

[1] Jesus is described three times as raising the dead (Luke vii. 14; viii. 54; John xi. 43), and in each case He uses words of direct command.

[2] 1 Kings xvii. 17-24; 2 Kings iv. 32-37.

lected in blackness and in silence, and so it was found by John the Baptist. Yet tidings came to him with increasing rapidity of the miracles of Jesus, and the conflict of doubt and hope made him seize the opportunity to send a message by two of his disciples. It was the plain question:

'Art thou He that cometh, or look we for another?'

Jesus let the messengers stay with Him in Galilee a little time, to see the miracles of healing that He worked. Then He bade them return, and tell John one by one of the cures they had witnessed and heard about, adding the raising of the dead (at Nain) and the preaching of good tidings to the poor.

'Blessed is he,' concludes the sympathizing Saviour, 'who shall find none occasion of stumbling in Me;' that is, blessed is he who shall not be turned aside from his faith and hope in Me by sorrow and persecution for My sake.

The messengers returned to the captive, and when they had gone Jesus spoke of His forerunner in beautiful words of praise that will live forever in the memory of man.

John might have seemed to waver for an instant; yet no vacillating doubter was he, like the reeds tossed to and fro by the wind in the Jordan valley, nor yet a parasitic dweller in kings' courts, but a man who, among his fellows, had none to excel him for dauntless courage and noble honesty.

The Pharisees and teachers of the Law, who formed an unfriendly element in His audience, demurred to this praise of John the Baptist. Jesus saw their feeling, and answered it by drawing a comparison be-

THE REED OF PALESTINE.

tween the Jews and wayward children in the market-place who would not join either in the mimic festivals or calamities of their companions, willing neither to play at dancing nor at mourning. So the Jews had objected to John because he was stern and ascetic; they blamed Jesus because He was familiar with the lower orders and lived a pleasant social life. The true reason was that they were stubborn in their own ways, and resented any new light, from whatever source it came. But all those who had any share of the Divine wisdom recognized it gladly, both in Jesus and in His austere cousin.

Perhaps it was on this occasion that Jesus uttered the foreboding outburst of pity and woe over the cities on the plain of Gennesareth beside the Galilean lake. They had been the scenes of the mighty works to which He had just pointed the disciples of John the Baptist as an evidence of His mission; yet He knew that the admiration and enthusiasm these miracles aroused would be but transient, and that many of those who saw them would not really repent. After these impassioned utterances He speaks of His mission as the Revealer of God the Father, and ends by the beautiful words which have comforted sad hearts for many centuries: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.'

In one of these Galilean towns, a Pharisee named Simon, invited Jesus to his house. This was not intended as any special mark of friendship, although the host was not apparently one of the suspicious band who had followed Him from Jerusalem. Jesus accepted the invitation, but was received in a condescending manner as an inferior.

Round the table were arranged couches on which the guests reclined, leaning upon their left arm and resting their feet behind them.[1] Any one who was to

[1] The early Jewish custom had been to sit upon mats round a low table (Gen. xxvii. 19; Judges xix. 6; 1 Sam. xx. 5, 24; 1 Kings xiii. 20), but as the national habits grew more luxurious the fashion of reclining at meals was borrowed from the neighboring Eastern nations (Amos

be treated with special honor laid aside his sandals; his dusty weary feet were then bathed with water by the servants, fragrant oil was shed upon his hair, and the host received him with a kiss of welcome on the cheek. All these ceremonies were omitted in the case of Jesus. Simon treated Him with distant politeness, perhaps because he was afraid of being considered a disciple, but probably because he really regarded the poor Teacher as some one far below him in station, whom he only invited because people were talking much about Him, and he wanted to satisfy his curiosity.

Jesus accepted this lack of the courtesy that should have been His due in silence; but as they reclined at the meal, a woman stole in through the open door.[1] She had doubtless heard the Saviour speak, and had been deeply moved by His teaching so far as to forsake the evil ways in which she had hitherto lived. Her heart was filled with penitence; her one thought was to show her sorrow and adoring love to Jesus by the only means in her power. Had she heard the tender invitation to all weary and heavy-laden souls, and did she long for the rest he promised? It may be so; for she stole humbly behind His couch, and before she could achieve her purpose the tears dropped fast from her eyes upon

iii. 12; vi. 4). The couch used was doubtless the Roman *triclinium*, on which three persons reclined, each overlapping, so to speak, his neighbor, and resting his head on or near the bosom of the one behind him. The triclinia were placed round three sides of a square, with low narrow tables before them.

[1] Nothing whatever is known as to the name of this woman. There is no shadow of a foundation for the supposition that she was Mary Magdalene.

His feet. She hurriedly wiped them with her long dishevelled hair as she bent down to hide her shame, then kissed His feet in an agony of reverent humbleness and love, and anointed them with the cool fragrant ointment she had brought.[1]

Jesus let her do all in silence, but Simon was watching the proceedings in scandalized indignation. 'Surely,' he thought, 'if this man were a prophet, He would know what sort of a woman this is! He would drive her away with scorn and anger, for her very touch is defilement.' Jesus read his thoughts, and put before him the parable of the two debtors, where both owe money, the one ten times as much as the other, and both, having nothing to pay, are forgiven. Which will love the merciful creditor most?

Simon, who does not see the point, coldly answers, 'He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most.'

Jesus bade him mark the woman, and contrast her attentions with his own. Her conduct showed the natural gratitude and love for much forgiveness. Simon's, Jesus implies, but does not say, points on the other hand to the inference that little is being pardoned.

And the gracious conclusion to the penitent woman is, 'Thy sins are forgiven.'

[1] This incident has been thoughtlessly confounded with the anointing mentioned in Matt. xxvi., Mark xiv., John xii. This happened in Galilee, that at Bethany; the woman here is 'a sinner,' there she is Mary, the well-known friend of Jesus; this was midway in his ministry, that took place just before His death. The resemblances in the name of the host, etc., are merely coincidences. Simon was an exceedingly common name.

The guests mused in astonishment and incredulity, 'Who is this that even forgiveth sins?' Jesus did not notice them, but said to the woman—

'Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.'

In this exquisite story we catch the whole spirit of Christ's ministry: lovely merciful tenderness to the fallen and repentant; grave disapproval of the hard, self-righteous, and exclusive. That purity is the most like His own which does not wrap its skirts about it and shrink from the touch of evil, but descends with willing alacrity among the degraded, unstained by their contact, anxious only to seek and to save that which was lost.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GATHERING OPPOSITION.

JESUS continued His circuit throughout Galilee during the summer months of the second year of His ministry, attended by His twelve disciples, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of God. Among His followers we hear for the first time of certain women. One of these was known as Mary Magdalene[1] (i. e. Mary of Magdala); she had received signal healing mercy from the hands of Jesus, and was wholly attached to His service. Even the wife of Herod's steward had dared to express her adherence to Him, and joined with other women in ministering to His needs from her possessions.

From the many works of mercy that He doubtless wrought during this period, one is selected—the healing

[1] There is no such town as Magdala mentioned in the New Testament; rather is it, as shown in the Revised Version, *Magadan*. The Magdala from which Mary derived her name was probably synonymous with Migdol, or watch-tower, many of which were found in Palestine. Her supposed home on the western shore of the lake is now called El Mejdel by the Arabs, where there are apparently the ruins of the large watch-tower which gave its name to the village.

of a 'demoniac' who was blind and dumb. The Scribes and Pharisees who came down from Jerusalem had not ceased their watch upon Jesus. His power was increasing, His disciples were organized into a body, and the matter was growing formidable in the eyes of these reverend authorities. They happened to witness the miracle, and while the threefold cure caused the people to exclaim in admiring wonder, 'Can this be the Son of David?'—i. e. the King who was to come—the Pharisees spread abroad a report that it was worked by the help of the Evil One. They could not deny that a cure had been performed, but in obstinate fury they declared that it could not be by the finger of God. In the clear strong reply of Jesus He exposes the foolishness of the supposition that the Prince of Evil Spirits would cast out his own agents, thus undoing his own work. He chid the Pharisees sternly for their idle and wicked suggestion, so obviously untrue on the very face of it, and uttered solemn words of warning as to the danger of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit which was manifested in Him.

Baffled in this attempt to slander Jesus, some of His enemies demanded a 'sign.' The miracle of healing was not enough for them; they would like to behold some celestial appearance, or hear a voice from heaven proclaiming His divinity. But again Jesus rebuked them, for the temper that prompted their challenge was not one of anxiety to learn the truth, but unbelieving arrogant defiance. No sign should be given but the sign of the prophet Jonah, He told them; referring to Jonah as a type of Himself in warning sinners, and also,

St. Matthew adds, because His descent into the deep bore a similarity to his coming death and resurrection.[1]

A solemn lesson to the unbelieving Jews, suggested by all that had just been taking place, followed in the illustration of the unclean spirit. In former days the Jews had fallen into idolatry; that had now been driven out. But they would not let the messenger of God occupy the vacant dwelling of their heart, and the evil that had formerly been expelled (although in a different shape) returned, bringing other evils in its train. And the last state of their nation should be worse than the first.

From the crowd that pressed around Him as He thus denounced the spirit of conservative, dogged self-righteousness which He never ceased to attack, came a woman's voice of rapturous admiration, extolling the blessedness of the mother who had such a Son. But Jesus replied, 'Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.'

As he continued his address to the multitude, word was brought to Him that His mother and His brethren desired to speak to Him. Pharisaic opposition had alarmed them on His account, and they either wished to expostulate with Him on His actions, or to warn Him about the danger He incurred in thus confronting

[1] See Matt. xii. 40. The word translated whale is simply a sea-monster. There are no whales in the Mediterranean. Three days and three nights, in Jewish speech, might stand for any period that included part of the first and part of the last day, for in the Talmud it is said that a day and night together make up a day (night-day), and any part of this is counted as a whole. Hence it would apply to the time from Friday afternoon to Sunday morning.

and rebuking these authorities of the people. But Jesus for a third time showed Mary that all claim of relationship must give way to the work for which He was sent. 'Who is My mother and My brethren?' said He to the messenger. And stretching out His hand towards His disciples, He said:

'Behold My mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in heaven, the same is My brother and sister and mother.'

When the time for the mid-day meal[1] had arrived on this eventful day, a Pharisee invited Him to take it at his house. This may seem strange after His stern condemnation of the sect to which His host belonged, but the invitation was probably given with the intention of catching up something in the words or actions of Jesus that might be made use of as a definite charge against him.

The rupture was not long in coming. As the guests entered, each went through an elaborate washing of hands,[2] but Jesus knew that crowds outside were waiting for His words, and went straight to the table to take the slight refreshment, which very likely consisted

[1] This was not dinner (δεῖπνον), but a light meal corresponding to the French *déjeuner* (ἄριστον), taken about noon.

[2] This washing was not for the mere sake of cleanliness, but had been made, by the oral law, into a series of elaborate and tedious ablutions. A book of Jewish ritual gives twenty-six prayers with which these washings are to be accompanied, and the Talmud says, 'It is better to go four miles to water than to incur guilt by neglecting hand-washing.' A Rabbi Akhiba by name, died of thirst in prison because he had not enough water allowed him to wash his hands and drink as well; and he was always spoken of with approbation.

of fruit (dates or figs) alone, without any preliminary ceremonies. The Pharisee, and doubtless his other guests, felt and expressed astonishment at this infringement of their traditions. Jesus, perceiving it, gave utterance to one of His sternest denunciations of the whole spirit of the Pharisees: their care about cleansing the outside while the inner being was full of wickedness—their insincerity—their pride. One of the learned men whose business it was to expound the oral law was reclining at the table; he thought that Jesus could not know He was denouncing the revered class of which he was a member, so he interrupted him with the words:

'Master, in saying this Thou reproachest us also.'

With perfect frankness Jesus accepted the challenge. Yes, He included them in His rebuke: they laid heavy burdens on the people, which they would not touch with a finger themselves; they kept the key of knowledge, and prevented others from entering in. They too should bear the guilt of the prophets who had been slain; for theirs was the same obstinate, prejudiced, cruel spirit that had hitherto destroyed the witnesses of God.

Once more, during the last week of His life, did Jesus pronounce with greater fulness and severity this denunciation, with its ofttimes repeated, 'Woe unto you!' Its only effect now was to exasperate His proud hearers. The meal probably broke up in confusion, and the Scribes and Pharisees crowded round Jesus trying to convict him from His own mouth of something which should enable them to put Him down.

From the inhospitable house He entered a dense throng that had collected outside, and speaking first to His disciples, and through them to the crowd that hung on His words, He exclaimed, 'Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.' Referring doubtless to the threatening attitude of the class He had offended, He bade His hearers not to be afraid of man, either now or when they should be brought before tribunals for His sake; for God would protect them, and He, the Son of Man, would own them before the angels of God.

Some foolish, covetous listener, who saw that Jesus used a tone of authority and marked His vast influence over the people, thought this would be a good opportunity to ask Him to interfere in His private affairs, and shouted out:

"Master, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me.'

Jesus gave Him at once to understand that He was not a judge or divider of worldly goods, and by the illustration of the rich man whose soul was suddenly required of him, warned the multitude to beware of covetousness. He pointed them to the birds of the air and lilies of the field as instances of their Heavenly Father's care, and bade them lead a life of dependence on God, ever prompt to act for His service, like servants ready and waiting their lord's return. [1]

[1] Portions of this sermon are found in Matt. v., vi., x., xvi., xxiv. Jesus doubtless was in the habit of repeating this teaching, or it is possible that Luke may have gathered scattered sayings into one discourse.

'A SOWER WENT FORTH TO SOW.'

This day was very full of work and incident. The throng pressed with undiminished eagerness round Jesus, and, entering a boat, He taught them again from the lake. It was from this time His frequent custom to use 'parables,' stories consistent with experience,[1] where a meaning underlies the outward seeming.

The parable of the Sower was a story taken from the familiar experience of those who were pressing in crowds on the beach. The seed sown on the hard, trodden path, which the birds picked up; that which flourished for a brief space in shallow, rocky soil; that which was choked by the thorns; and that which fell into good ground, and yielded thirty, sixty, and a hundred times its value—all found a counterpart in the hearers' recollection. They would certainly remember the story better than they would have remembered the truth it embodied if that had been uttered in plain language—i. e. that good teaching is the seed of holy living, and that there are obstacles of various kinds which prevent it from bearing the right fruit. They would carry the parable home in their memories, and if they were teachable its meaning would dawn on their simple minds. Others who were obstinate and hard of heart would have no opportunity of understanding the words of Jesus. For, as He said, to him that hath—i. e. a simple teachable disposition—shall be given; but from him that hath *not* shall be taken away the opportunities he hath. Men cannot be taught unless they have receptive minds.

[1] Parables are thus distinct from *fables*, which may introduce impossibilities, or *allegories*, where qualities are sometimes personified.

So Jesus told His disciples when he explained to them the parable of the Sower.

Other parables which St. Matthew places in the same chapter (xiii.), but which probably were delivered at different times, are: The Wheat and The Tares; The Grain of Mustard Seed; The Leaven; The Hidden Treasure; The Pearl of Great Price; The Draw-net.

The first 'parable of the kingdom,' that of the Sower, represents the beginning of the kingdom of God. The second shows the attempts of the Evil One to hinder its progress. The third and fourth deal with its growth as gradual and inevitable. These have to do rather with the general aspect of the progress of Christianity; but the next two parables, the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price, treat of the possession of true religion by the individual. Some come upon it unexpectedly, like a treasure hid in a field; others knowingly give up all for its possession. Finally, the parable of the Draw-net shows that many will profess Christianity who have not taken it into their hearts.

What is meant by this 'kingdom of God' or the 'kingdom of heaven'?

It is the reign of God in the hearts of men. How can He reign thus?

By men knowing and loving Him—which they come to do through the Son who revealed Him. When they know and love God they will obey Him, and by thus owning Him as their Sovereign will become members of His kingdom.

Thus the kingdom is no outward church, but a spiritual realm. Yet from it comes all that is actual

and practical in the way of good work. It is not an organization; but from it organizations spring. It is unseen; yet it gives birth to the seen and felt benevolence and goodness in the world.

Never must it be forgotten that this kingdom of which Jesus spoke so often had been looked for in another sense by His hearers. That is why He patiently explains to them over and over again the true nature of this ideal realm, which they must have found so hard to understand.

CHAPTER XIX.

ON THE EASTERN SHORE—A DAY OF MIRACLES.

EVENING was come. The day, with its work of mercy in healing the demoniac as its commencement, the conflict with the Pharisees, intensified after the meal in one of their houses, the sermon to the multitude, and the parable of the Sower, had been full of activity; but the labor of Jesus was not yet ended. Wearied with His ministry to the throngs that pressed upon Him, He resolved to cross to the opposite shore of the lake; but before He entered the boat three men who had heard His words addressed Him in succession. First a Scribe who had been touched by the Master's utterances offered to follow Him whithersoever He went.

Jesus wished that he should understand the true meaning of his offer, and replied, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.'

The man had a good position in life. Perhaps Jesus saw below the passing impulse, and knew that he

would be daunted by the hardships of the lot of a disciple.

Another, who received from the Master Himself the summons, 'Follow Me,' stipulated for delay to attend his father's funeral, but was told to let those who were dead in spirit bury the physically dead.[1] And a third candidate, who asked to go home and bid farewell to his family, was answered by these striking words:

'No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back[2] is fit for the kingdom of God.'

Brave endurance of poverty and homelessness; dauntless and unswerving courage—these were the materials needed for a good disciple; and Jesus, though He was lenient to His followers, knew it was vain to encourage the half-hearted to enter His service.

But He wished to put a stretch of the lake between Himself and the importunate multitude, so His disciples took Him 'even as He was' in the boat, with no preparation for the journey, and made for the eastern shore while other vessels followed in their wake. Tired out with the day's excitement and fatigue, He fell asleep on the cushion in the stern. Suddenly a storm of wind swept down the trough of the hills, and lashed the waters into fury.[3] In a moment the scene was changed; the

[1] Some have thought this answer means, 'Let me live at home till my father's death;' but this seems too vague a term of time to be calculated upon. Jesus was probably thinking of the thirty days' mourning implied in burying a relative, and felt the delay required by Jewish etiquette would be excessive.

[2] The furrow cannot be kept straight if the man who pushes the light and easily overturned Eastern plough looks about him.

[3] To any who have had experience of rowing upon lakes in moun-

craft was flung on high and dashed into the curdling hollow of the waves, while foam-crested breakers swept over the deck. The boat was filling—the danger seemed imminent—all was noise, confusion, and terror, but Jesus slept on. His disciples, in fear for their lives, awoke Him, crying, 'Master, Master, we perish!' Would He not share their consternation, thus suddenly aroused in the midst of tumult? No; He answered their wild appeal by the quiet words, 'Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?' Then, rising to His feet, He uttered the command, 'Peace, be still.'

The wind dropped, and 'there was a great calm.' Once more the boat ploughed its way over the tranquil surface of the lake, and the astonished disciples and sailors whispered to each other:

'What manner of Man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?'

They soon reached the eastern shore,[1] which was, as

tainous districts it is needless to explain that the wind is apt to sweep down between the hills with alarming suddenness, changing a calm sheet of water in a few moments into a raging sea. The Lake of Galilee is especially liable to these disturbances. The air of the basin, in its deep depression below the Mediterranean, becomes heated; then the winds from Lebanon and Hermon rush down through the ravines at the head of the lake with extraordinary impetuosity, causing a furious tumult of the elements.

[1] Matthew terms it 'the country of the *Gadarenes;*' Luke and Mark, 'of the *Gerasenes.*' Gadara and Gerasa were two towns of the Decapolis, some distance from the scene, which probably gave their name to the whole district. The ravine is conjectured to be Wady Fik, nearly opposite Tiberias, and the city at its head is identical with Gamala or Hippas, the ruins of which still remain. We follow Dean Stanley's account, who says, 'Almost every feature in the story can be traced to the locality.'—*Sinai and Palestine,* p. 380.

we have seen, a narrow, level strip of land, overhung by hills, and here in the early morning they landed. Their greeting was a strange one. A ravine cleft the hill-side before them, and a path led up the gorge to a city on the height beyond. Down this path a wild and frenzied creature[1] who saw them land came rushing from the tombs hewn in the rocky side of the ravine. No provision was made in Jewish life for these miserable demoniacs, and as it was believed that the evil spirits who possessed them loved to haunt tombs and lonely places, they were driven forth to dwell in solitude. So in this haunt of death the wretched creature lived. Sometimes he would roam the hills beside the lake, and then, in wilder paroxysms of fury, retreat into the eastern desert beyond them. So fierce was he that no one could bind him, and he was constantly crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Hastening towards Jesus, whom he had espied from afar, he fell down before Him, with wild adjurations and entreaties.

'What is thy name?' asked Jesus, gently trying to recall the perturbed nature to itself; but the answer came as from the evil spirit, 'My name is Legion, for we are many.'

Above, on the hill-side, a large herd of swine were feeding, belonging doubtless to the Gentile settlers on these coasts, for they were unlawful food for Jews.

[1] Mark and Luke mention one demoniac only, but Matthew says there were two. The case which is fully described was doubtless the worst, supposing there to have been a couple; but perhaps the remark, 'we are many,' led to a confusion as to the number.

Jesus bade the spirits that possessed the sufferer depart. At the same moment 'the whole herd rushed down the steep into the sea, and perished in the waters.'

The man was cured, and in the wild rout of the animals, who were considered unclean, he and the disciples saw a visible proof of the departure of his unseen foes. The swineherds quickly spread the news throughout the neighborhood. All the inhabitants of the district, especially those of the city at the top of the ravine, flocked to see the demoniac, of late wild and dangerous, clothed and in his right mind, clinging with docile and adoring love to the Saviour whose word had healed him. One would have expected them to beseech the mighty Healer to remain with them; but they were ignorantly terrified at such an instance of supernatural power. Besides, their swine had been destroyed; and, caring more about their property than about the restoration of their countryman, they entreated Jesus to go away. The poor man who had been healed, on the contrary, begged that he might stay beside Him always; but his Master bade him serve in another way, by returning home and proclaiming the great things that had been done on his behalf.

Complying with the inhospitable request of these people, Jesus returned with His disciples to Capernaum, having enjoyed little rest, but leaving one witness to His power and love behind Him on the eastern shore. Long before the boat touched the beach of firm white sand outside Capernaum, the travellers could discern crowds of people straining their eyes across the lake

for the vessel bearing the Teacher whose presence they had missed.

Matthew, who had probably not made one of the company in the visit to the eastern shore, had prepared a feast for Jesus in his house. This appears to have been a sort of farewell festival upon the winding-up of the toll-gatherer's affairs, preparatory to his quitting all for Christ. Some time would be needed in a profession like his for the due setting of money matters in order, that he might leave all clear for his successor, therefore this final separation may have taken place some little time after his call from Jesus. St. Luke's expression, 'a great feast,' seems to imply that Matthew had been rich, and was sacrificing wealth to follow the Saviour.

As he had been a 'publican,' there were naturally many of his own order present at this entertainment, who, outcasts from society as they were deemed, lent an attentive ear to the teachings of Jesus.

The Pharisees, who had not forgiven their rebuff and stern reproof so lately given, found out the company that Jesus was in, and seized upon it as a point on which to condemn Him. Their strictures came to His ears, and He replied, in the same spirit that animated His words when the 'woman who was a sinner' anointed His feet:

'They that are whole have no need of a physician; but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'

Then He bade them go and learn the meaning of the verse, 'I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.' How angry they must have been! they, the most pious of

Jews, who pride themselves on knowing all about the Divine commandments. It had never occurred to them that mercy towards sinners was better in the sight of God than sacrifice in the Temple.

Some of John's disciples asked Jesus at this time why they and the followers of the Pharisees fasted, while He and His disciples did not. He would not enter upon a thorough discussion of a question so unimportant, but replied to them by using John's own comparison of Himself to a bridegroom. While He was with the 'sons of the bride-chamber,'[1] His disciples, they could not fast, which was a sign of mourning; but when He was taken away for a little while, they should fast. He went on to express, in the parable of the New Patch on the Old Garment, and the New Wine in Old Wine-skins, a truth that very likely the hearers did not comprehend; that Christianity would not fit in with the outworn forms of Judaism, which were gradually to be superseded, but must have new modes of practice and application to the life of men.

While He was speaking thus, a ruler of the synagogue, Jairus by name, came to Matthew's house in great agitation and distress. He had doubtless made one of the deputation who had formerly appealed to Jesus on behalf of the centurion's servant; he knew the power of the Saviour to heal, and he had now come with an eager petition on his own account. Falling at the feet of Jesus, he cried, 'My little daughter is dying;

[1] The nearest friends of the newly-wedded couple are meant by this expression.

nay, she may even now be dead; come and save her life!' The merciful Master complied with his agonized entreaty, and left the house with His disciples. Crowds were thronging the streets waiting for His appearance, and among them a woman who had been diseased for twelve years, and had spent all her money in vain attempts to get better, was struggling to be near the place where He should pass. Her faith was great, for she felt sure that if she could only touch His garment she should be made whole; and she was not deceived. She succeeded in pushing her way to Him, and caught hold of the fringe of His robe.[1] At once she felt that she was healed, and shrank away among the crowd, hoping to escape notice. But Jesus knew what had happened, and looked about, saying, 'Who touched my clothes?' Peter's reply seems to show that in such a throng it was absurd to ask the question. But Jesus required an open confession from those whom He helped; and as He paused and cast His penetrating eye over the pushing, eager multitude, the woman came forward in fear and trembling. She fell down before Him and told Him all the truth, afraid lest He should be angry with her. But it was

A FRINGED GARMENT.

[1] Every Jew wore a fringe, bound by a blue ribbon, on each border of his robe, to remind him that he was holy to God (Num. xv. 37-40; Deut. xxii. 12). The Pharisees used to enlarge these borders (Matt. xxiii. 5) in order to appear of superior sanctity.

for her own sake and that of her fellows that He had required the acknowledgment, and instead of reproof came the gracious words:

'Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.'

Meanwhile, Jairus must have been on thorns of anxiety lest this delay should make Jesus too late; and in fact, before He had finished speaking to the woman a messenger stepped up to the ruler with the sad tidings:

'Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.'

Jesus mercifully bade the poor father believe and not be afraid; and they went on their way to his house. Here the customary clamor of hired mourners had set in. The wailing, beating of breasts, and flute-playing[1]—all for the sake of money, and not for grief—must have been very repulsive to Jesus, who hated shams of all descriptions; and entering the house, He bade them be still. 'The little maid is not dead, but sleepeth,' He said. Their mock lamentation was speedily turned into real derision as they ridiculed Him for such a suggestion. But He made them go out of doors, and taking the genuine mourners—The father and mother of the child—and His three apostles, Peter, James, and John, He entered the still chamber of death.

Taking the cold little hand, He uttered the words 'Talitha cumi' (Little maid, or literally, my lamb, arise!').[2] And as He spoke the breath returned to the

[1] See 2 Chron. xxxv. 25; Jer. ix. 17; Amos v. 16.

[2] Mark gives us the actual words of Jesus, which he doubtless

shrouded form; the child arose well and strong, and her parents received her back from death with overwhelming awe and wonder. Jesus bade them give her some food, and added an urgent warning to them not to talk about the miracle. It could not fail to be known, but He meant to imply that it was too sacred and wonderful to be made a topic of common discussion, and it was well too for the child's sake that she should not be the subject of notoriety all her life.

Not even yet were the works of mercy ended for the day. As Jesus left the house of Jairus two blind men followed Him, crying out, 'Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David!' He did not at first notice them, but passed on to His home in Capernaum. They would not be abashed, but entered the house after Him. He asked them if they believed in His ability to heal; they answered 'Yea, Lord,' and He touched their eyes, saying, 'According to your faith be it unto you.'

They were cured, and, as was His wont, He bade them not speak of it. But they disregarded His commands, and the fame of that day of miracles spread abroad throughout all the country.

St. Matthew here tells us of another instance where Jesus healed a man that was dumb and 'possessed with a devil.' Again the hostile Pharisees, who were still in Capernaum, reverted to their original accusation, that He did it through the Prince of the Devils. Jesus had

learned from his kinsman Peter, who was present. They are in the Aramaic language, which Jesus probably used in ordinary conversation.

fully answered them on a former occasion, and does not seem now to notice the foolish charge.

The enthusiasm and commotion about Him at Capernaum appear, however, to have become so great, that for the sake of more tranquil labor He quitted it awhile to visit other scenes.

CHAPTER XX.

MISSION OF THE TWELVE—MURDER OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

ONCE more Jesus went into 'His own country' and visited Nazareth with His disciples. The circumstances were different from those attending His last appearance in His old home. Then He was on the threshold of His ministry; now He was a well-known Teacher, whose mission was accredited by the report of many wonderful deeds. Would His old acquaintances repent their former violence, and listen to His words in reverence?

No! Nazareth was Nazareth still; the inhabitants were shut up within their own narrowness and self-conceit, and could not recognize that He, their former fellow-townsman, had come from God. They fell back upon the old ignorant style of argument. Is not this the carpenter's son? do not we know all His relatives? how is it then to be supposed that He is on a higher level than ourselves? Their obstinacy drew from Jesus the saying that 'a prophet is not without honor save in

his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.'

Those who should have known Him best, knew Him least. Willingly, we may suppose, would He have benefited the inhabitants of the place where His early lot was cast, but He could do nothing without faith, and all He could accomplish was to lay His hands on a few sick folk and heal them.

The general unbelief distressed and astonished Him, and He soon left the place never to return.

He now went round about the villages, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the 'gospel of the kingdom' of which we hear so much, and healing all manner of diseases. His heart—great, merciful, and tender—yearned over the multitudes whom He saw, and whom as yet He could not gather into one fold. For they seemed to Him like sheep, harassed and scattered, with no shepherd to protect and guide them; or like a plenteous harvest, wasted for lack of laborers to reap it.

'Pray ye to the Lord of the harvest,' said He to His disciples, 'that He would send forth laborers into His harvest.' And immediately afterwards He gave effect to His words by calling together the Twelve and commissioning them to go forth two and two into all Galilee. As yet they were not to go into the heathen cities, nor to the Samaritans, but to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Their mission was to declare that the 'kingdom of heaven' was at hand. They were simply to draw the attention of the people to the fact that a great change had dawned, and to point them to the Founder of the new system. As credentials of their mission, Christ

imparted to them some of His own power of healing. Their preparation for the journey was to be very simple; they were to take no money[1] or change of garments, but were to depend on the hospitality of those to whom they addressed themselves, entering any house where they hoped they would be welcome, with the gracious salutation, 'Peace be to you!' If they were roughly rejected, they were to shake the dust from their feet as they left the place, in token that the responsibility did not rest with them.

Jesus went on to warn them to be wise and cautious in their behavior, telling them that they would be persecuted and hated for His sake. Yet He cheered them by His own example, and by assurances of the all-protecting care of their Heavenly Father.[2]

'He that doth not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me,' said the Master; and He promised them that the smallest service rendered in His name should not go unrewarded.

They obeyed Him and went forth, starting probably from Capernaum. We are not told details of their

[1] The practice of willing hospitality to every chance stranger in the East made this an easy matter. 'At this day the farmer sets out on excursions quite as extensive without a *para* in his purse.'—Thomson's *The Land and the Book*, p. 346.

[2] This discourse is given in fullness only by Matthew, and is divided into three parts. Matt. x. 5–15 refers to the trial mission then commencing; 16–23 to the future mission of the apostles to all nations; 24–42 to their future position and that of all Christians in a world which rejects Him. It is possible that in the latter part Matthew has gathered into one various sayings of Jesus, for Mark and Luke give an epitome of the first part only, and there are sentences which seem to belong to a subsequent period of His ministry.

ministry, save that they preached the glad tidings He had given them, and healed many sick persons.

When Jesus had ended the charge to His disciples He went forth alone to teach and preach as usual. But the rumor of a cruel murder soon reached His ears. Even now the traveller upon the height of Machærus, 3,800 feet above the Dead Sea, can look down into the sultry gloom of a deep dungeon in the ruined citadel. For more than a year and a half this terrible prison had confined John the Baptist. We saw him recently, half-hoping, half-despairing, sending a message to Jesus, the merciful answer to which must have filled him with rejoicing and faith. After that he had not very long to wait for his release. Herodias, on whose account John had offended Herod, was bitter against the fearless prophet who had dared to denounce her actions, and tried to persuade the tetrarch to kill him.[1] This Herod dared not do, because of the people who followed John; besides, he had a sort of unwilling reverence for his brave and upright character. Like many other weak and guilty men, his conscience alarmed him from time to time, and then he would send for John out of his prison, and listen to his counsels. He would not, however, give up the one sin that John denounced, and put away the wicked woman at his side.

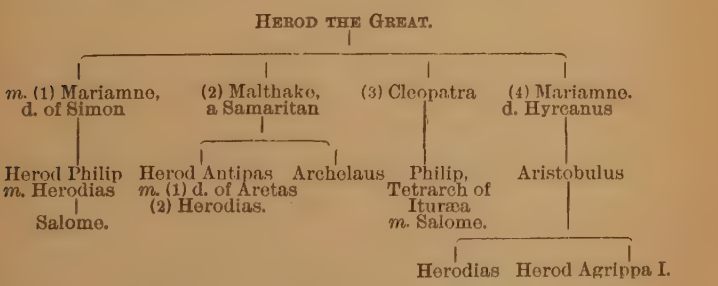
So he went on from day to day, dallying with his conscience, feeling uneasy, and yet refusing to do right.

[1] The genealogy of the Herod family is so confusing that the following fragment of a table is appended, by which it will be seen that

MACHLERUS.

It was Herod's birthday,[1] and he made a grand feast to his courtiers and captains, at the palace of Machærus, where he was staying to carry on a campaign against Aretas, King of Arabia Petræa.[2] What a contrast was afforded by the splendid banquet-hall to the dark dungeon in the citadel hard by! Everything that extravagance could devise or wealth could purchase was lavished at this festival, and at the close the daughter of Herodias and Herod's half-brother Philip, a grown-up girl named Salome, came in and danced before the company. Herod was delighted at this unexpected compliment to his guests, for although hired performers often danced at the close of such banquets, it was very unusual for a girl of high rank like Salome to do so.

Herodias was the daughter of Aristobulus, the half-brother of both Philip and Herod:



[1] The Jews did not keep birthdays; this was a custom borrowed from the heathens.

[2] This Aretas, as appears from the table, was the father of the first wife of Herod Antipas, who had been put away to make room for Herodias. Aretas was so indignant at the insult that he invaded Herod's territory, and, shortly after the murder of John the Baptist, defeated him with great loss.

Flushed with wine and the excitement of the adulation he had received, the tetrarch cried out that he would give Salome anything she asked for, even to the half of his kingdom; and he confirmed the reckless promise with a reiterated oath.

The girl ran to her mother, and asked what she should choose. Herodias, who had planned the whole scheme, bade her ask for the head of John the Baptist in a 'charger,' or a large dish, and Salome, hurrying back, repeated the request. This suddenly sobered Herod; the horror of such a demand was too much even for him, and he was 'exceeding sorry.' But he had given an oath in the hearing of his guests; he foolishly dared not break a promise made in the heat of intoxication, and was more afraid of the contempt of men who sat around his table than of the wrath of God. Unwillingly he bade a soldier of the bodyguard descend to the dungeon and carry out the horrible deed. Only a few minutes elapsed, and the man came back with his ghastly burden. Salome, who must have been shameless and wicked, to fall in with so hideous a plot, carried the bleeding head in the large dish to her mother, and the cruel Herodias felt that her vengeance was satisfied.

So died this great and noble man, a martyr to his unflinching and fearless testimony against evil. His disciples, who had remained faithful during his long imprisonment, soon heard of his murder; they took away the headless corpse, buried it, and then went to tell Jesus that His forerunner and cousin was dead.

Not long afterwards Herod returned to his palace at

Tiberias, on the Lake of Galilee, and here the fame of Jesus reached his ears. The mission of the Twelve had spread abroad tidings of the new Teacher more than ever, and the guilty conscience of Herod was perplexed. The historian Josephus tells us he was a Sadducee, and therefore he professed not to believe in the resurrection of the dead. But he did believe in it, in spite of himself, for he feared that John had risen from the dead in the person of Jesus. Others said He was Elijah, or a new prophet; but Herod clung to his own interpretation, and wished, although his conscience stung him with alarm and remorse, to be brought face to face with the Saviour, that he might prove whether his superstitious fears were true.

Herodias died in poverty and obscurity at Lyons, on the frontiers of Gaul, whither Herod was banished in A. D. 39. His disgrace was solely owing to her pride and ambition, for she urged him to go to Rome to obtain the title of king,[1] and at the court of Caligula the emissaries of her brother, Herod Agrippa, manœuvred against him in such a way as to obtain, instead of the boon he requested, a doom of perpetual exile.

[1] Although Herod is called 'the king' in the story of John the Baptist's death, he had no right whatever to the title, which was given him as a mere compliment by his subjects. His father, Herod the Great, had been king, but he was only a tetrarch.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND.

THE winter months of the second year of the ministry of Jesus were probably occupied by the Twelve in journeying through the towns according to His command; by the Master in His own work of preaching and healing, unrecorded in detail because those who noted and treasured up His actions were absent. Early in the spring came the news of the death of John the Baptist,[1] and very soon afterwards the apostles returned from their mission. They found Jesus beset as of old by a numerous crowd; 'there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.' But His spirit was saddened by the death of His faithful witness, and the weight of His own coming rejection began to rest heavily upon His spirit. From this time we mark a less public method

[1] From John vi. 4, compared with Matt. xiv. 13, it is evident that the departure of Jesus into the lonely place where He fed the five thousand was not long after the arrival of the news of John's death, and a little before the Passover, which fell about April 17.

in His teaching; He withdraws Himself apart with His disciples, and gives much time to their instruction; while, as we shall see, the crowds who had hitherto followed Him everywhere soon begin to show signs of fickleness and disappointment.

On the return of the Twelve Jesus accordingly bade them come with Him away from the turmoil and excitement of Capernaum, for rest, and the quiet recounting of their experiences. The natural retreat for Him was the eastern shore, and on this occasion He bade them direct the boat to the north-east extremity of the lake, where a wild uncultivated region took its name from a second Bethsaida. The place was now called *Julias*, from a new city built on the site of the old fishing village by Philip the Tetrarch, and named in honor of the daughter of Augustus Cæsar; yet the Galileans, clinging to early habit, still used the word 'Bethsaida,' at the risk of confusion with the western village, 'Bethsaida of Galilee,' which was the home of Philip, Andrew and Peter.

Near Bethsaida Julias was a grassy plain overshadowed by hills,[1] and to this lonely spot the little vessel sped over the six miles of water from Capernaum.

But the hope of Jesus and His disciples for seclusion and rest in the peaceful shadow of the hills was in vain. The crowds who were longing to see and hear Him watched the boat depart, and made their way on foot in the same direction round the head of the lake. An

[1] The modern plain of Butaiha. See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 372.

unfavorable wind delayed the little craft, for the people 'outwent' the vessel, and when its prow touched the shore they were thronging in readiness to receive Jesus and His disciples as they landed.

From St. John's account[1] we may suppose that Jesus went straight to the hill-side overlooking the plain, and rested there until the whole crowd had assembled on the sward below. Then He welcomed them kindly, weary though He was, and spoke to them of the kingdom of God, healing those who had need of Him.

Long did the multitude linger, enthralled by His gracious words and deeds; but the afternoon was advancing,[2] and the disciples were concerned lest the people should be benighted without food in that lonely place. Jesus, who knew they must be tired and hungry by this time, had already questioned Philip as to the resources for providing a meal. 'This He said to prove him,' St. John adds, 'for He Himself knew what He would do.' Philip replied despondingly that if they should spend 200 denarii[3] (about 7*l.*) in bread it would

[1] This is the only instance, except in the story of our Lord's sufferings and resurrection, where St. John traverses the same ground as the other three Evangelists. It is noticeable that he alone calls the lake the 'Sea of Tiberias'; the Roman name which would be most familiar to the Gentiles, for whom his Gospel was written. On their account also he explains that the Passover was 'a feast of the Jews.'

[2] There were 'two evenings' in the Jewish division of the day; the first (δείλη ὀψία) was our 'afternoon,' beginning at three P. M.; the second (ὀψία) began at six o'clock. Matt. xiv. 15 refers to the first, 23 to the second.

[3] The denarius was a little less than a shilling (about 9*d.*). Perhaps Philip was referring to the amount they had in their common purse.

not be sufficient, for the congregation numbered more than five thousand.[1]

'How many loaves have ye?' asked Jesus. He intended to work a miracle, but He wished His disciples to share as far as possible in the act of mercy. He was willing to add His wonder-working power to their resources, but would not put forth the one without an ungrudging use of the other. Andrew, Peter's brother, replied that the lad who was in attendance on them had five barley loaves and two fishes. 'But what are they among so many?' he added.

'Make the men sit down,' was the only answer of Jesus; and the apostles obediently, though doubtless in wonder, arranged the men in companies of fifty on the long grass that grows freely near the lake, and that formed, in its spring luxuriance, a soft and comfortable couch. In their gayly colored dresses on the greensward they must have looked like bright squares of red, blue or yellow flowers, for Mark uses a word signifying 'garden-beds'[2] in describing them. Jesus now took the five loaves and two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, He gave thanks, broke the food, and gave it to His disciples.

Barley bread was the coarsest kind in use, and the mention of it shows that Jesus and His followers were

[1] The words of the Evangelists Matthew and John distinguish the people as *men*. There were probably but few women and children with them.

[2] *ἀνέπεσον πρασιαὶ πρασιαί* is the expression, which St. Mark doubtless received from St. Peter, to whom he was indebted for the description.

accustomed to the roughest food. But as it left His hands it was multiplied, so that the disciples found enough to supply the needs of all the waiting, hungry company. When they were satisfied, He gave them a quiet lesson against waste by bidding His followers take up the fragments that remained. They gathered twelve wicker-baskets[1] full of the fragments of the feast, which had been shared by five thousand men, besides women and children.

The effect of this miracle was to impress the people with the idea that Jesus was the Prophet whom they expected from Old Testament predictions. They had still, in spite of His teachings about the kingdom of God, no true notion of His real mission, for they wished to take Him by force and make Him a king. Great was the excitement and tumult that resulted, and the disciples seemed to share in it, so He 'constrained' them to embark again for Capernaum; and when the multitude saw that the Twelve had left Him they were less unwilling to depart.

The greater part of the excited crowd obeyed His orders to disperse in the gathering dusk, and when all had gone save a remnant who lingered through wonder and curiosity, Jesus went further up the hill-side to a lonely place, where He remained awhile to pray.

Meanwhile the waters of the lake were rising by

[1] The word for baskets (κόφινοι) differs from that used in the account of the feeding of the four thousand (rope baskets, σπυρίδες). The Jews frequently carried these wicker baskets about with them, to prevent their food from being polluted by the touch of the heathen.

THE LOAVES AND FISHES.

reason of a strong west wind that rushed down from the hills and lashed its surface into fury, preventing the disciples from making any headway towards Capernaum and the western Bethsaida.

Jesus was alone on the mountain side, doubtless absorbed in sad thoughts of the murder of John and of the fickle multitude whose misjudging enthusiasm He was soon to undeceive. Below Him was the storm-tossed lake, reflecting broken gleams of moonlight. In the midst of the waters was the little boat, with the disciples laboring anxiously at the oar. For several hours they struggled on, but dawn was approaching[1] before they had rowed much more than half the way across.

As they were in the worst of their peril and concern, they saw a Form treading the dark waters, and in terror they cried out, for they thought it was a phantom. But the familiar voice of their Master spoke to them in gentle, reassuring tones:

'It is I; be not afraid.'

Peter impulsively cried out, 'Lord, if it be thou, bid me come to Thee upon the waters.'

'Come,' replied Jesus; and Peter enthusiastically leapt from the boat to join his Master. While he kept his eye fixed upon Him he was safe; but the wind and the darkness of the boisterous waves terrified him, and

[1] The 'fourth watch of the night.' The Jews used formerly to divide the night into three watches (Judges vii. 19), but they had now generally adopted the Roman division into four periods, called in Mark xiii. 35, even, midnight, cockcrowing, and the morning.

he exclaimed in a fit of alarm, contrasting strangely with his former ardent confidence:

'Lord, save me!'

Jesus immediately caught him by the hand, with a kind reproof:

'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' and they entered the boat together. The wind fell, and the vessel swiftly made its way over the calm lake to the Plain of Gennesareth. The apostles were amazed and bewildered at such a miracle, notwithstanding the multiplying of the loaves and fishes which they had witnessed, and exclaimed, as no one but Nathanael had done hitherto:

'Truly Thou art the Son of God!'

From St. Mark's account it seems that on the Saviour's landing He was at once greeted by the popular enthusiasm to escape which for awhile He had gone to the opposite coast.

He healed the sick whom they laid in His way in the streets, and even those who caught at the hem of His garment as He passed were made whole.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BREAD OF LIFE.

THE people who had partaken of the loaves and fishes on the north-east shore had not all gone away after the miracle. The remainder passed the warm spring night in that grassy place, and in the morning they looked for Jesus again, but He was not on the plain nor on the hills around. Only one boat had been there, and in that they had seen the disciples embark without Him, so He could not have sailed away. Where could he have gone in the night? By this time other vessels had come across from Tiberias on the opposite shore, driven out of their course by the same west wind which had baffled the disciples on the previous evening; in these the inquirers sailed to Capernaum to inquire after Jesus at His home. They found Him sitting and teaching in the synagogue on the next day, which must therefore have been a Sabbath or a feast day; but they could not understand how He had crossed the lake without a boat to bring Him over.

'Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?' they asked.

This question Jesus did not answer. He saw into

their motives; they had been waiting about, and were now following Him, not because they understood His teaching or wished to become His disciples, but because they wanted to get something more from Him. Perhaps, as He had given them supper, He would give them breakfast in the same way! Against this spirit we find Jesus continually on His guard. His miracles were not worked to gratify a vulgar curiosity or to satisfy bodily need alone. The tempter in the wilderness had sought, before His mission began, to force Him to use His supernatural power for wrong purposes; but He steadily kept in view the true end of miracles, which was to point away from the bodily want which He supplied to the spiritual need which He alone could meet. Only to those who were able to look beneath the outward part of the miracle to its true import did He really manifest Himself. And He knew that those who had followed Him now from the eastern shore of the lake had no such spiritual insight. 'Ye seek Me,' said He to them, 'not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled.' The wonder and the food were all they cared for; the 'sign,' i.e. the token of something greater underlying the act, was nothing to them. They were following him about, neglecting their occupations, for the sake of obtaining miraculous aid from Him. This he condemns by his words, 'Work not for the meat which perisheth.' He is not finding fault with hard work, but would have men come to Him for something better than for loaves and fishes; even food for the soul, which should nourish it for ever. And this

eternal sustenance He, the Son of Man, set apart to His work by the Father, would give them.

'What shall we do that we may work the works of God?' they asked.

Jesus bade them believe in Him.

This was the first step to salvation; did they trust Him, the rest would follow. But the reply of the people shows the ignorant, dull, worldly character of their minds. 'If we are to believe in you, do something else wonderful.' Their minds were running on Moses,[1] who had, as they said, fed their fathers during forty years with manna from heaven. Jesus, they were evidently thinking, had only given bread to five thousand on one evening.

Jesus told them that not Moses, but God, gave them the bread from heaven of old; then He went on to speak of the *true* Bread from heaven, which gave life unto the world.

'Lord, evermore give us this bread!' cry the multitude, as the Samaritan woman had exclaimed, 'Sir, give me this water!' But they did not know what He meant.

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.'

He meant that he could satisfy by the gift of Himself all the longing of the soul; and to this He added:

'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'

[1] The Jews had a tradition, founded on Ps. lxxii. 16, that when the Messiah came He would repeat the miracle of the manna.

For centuries these gracious words have comforted thousands of anxious hearts. But they were not understood nor welcomed by most of those who heard them when they were first uttered. While He said, 'I am come down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me, angry murmurs broke out among the audience. Was not this Jesus, Joseph's son? What did He mean by saying He had come down from heaven?

Jesus went on further to tell them that He was the revelation of the Father; that He was the living bread that had come down from heaven; and that this bread was His flesh, which He would give for the life of the world.

The murmurs of disapprobation grew louder and more angry. The Jews could discern no truth through the figurative expression. 'How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?' said they. In still more striking language Jesus expressed the same truth, that He was the nourishment of souls.

The Jews need not have found any difficulty in seeing what he meant by these figurative utterances, for the simile of 'eating bread' was frequently used for the reception of any doctrine; although it is easier for us now to understand in what sense we are to 'feed on Him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.'[1] But

[1] Does Jesus refer in this discourse to the future institution of the Lord's Supper? It seems not. His words are thoroughly spiritual in their application, and convey the same truth in figurative language which the Lord's Supper expresses by a symbolic act; but the 'eating' and drinking' are purely metaphorical terms.

their will was opposed to His; and many even of His disciples said, 'This is a hard saying: who can hear it?'

Jesus read their thoughts, and when He had left the synagogue He spoke to His followers, prophesying of His future ascension, which should prove that He had in truth come down from heaven. He added that the words He had spoken were spirit and life; the flesh—that is, the outward form—was nothing. 'Do not trouble yourself about the symbolic language,' He seems to have said, 'but grasp the inner meaning it conveys.'

Why could they not catch the spirit and life that the words contained?

Because there were some who believed not; and in fact the number even now of the disciples was to be sifted. Many of those who could not understand, and did not want to understand, the spiritual teaching of Jesus left Him on this occasion.

He said to His twelve apostles, in tones whose tender sadness seems audible through the words, 'Will ye also go away?' Simon Peter, so often the spokesman, answered:

"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that Thou art the Holy One of God.'

But there was one even in that little company who was to prove a traitor, and Jesus knew it. He sorrowfully answered, 'Did I not choose you, the Twelve, and one of you is a devil?'[1]

[1] The word translated 'devil' was, especially if Jesus spoke in Aramaic, by no means so strong a term as in English, but rather 'adversary' or 'conspirator.'

Very possibly this crisis, when many followers were departing, and Jesus was clearly showing that He did not mean to establish a temporal kingdom, may have called forth some sign of disloyalty on the part of the man of Kerioth, the only Judæan in the band, whose attachment to the national ideal would naturally be more intolerant and fanatical than that of his Galilean comrades. However that may be, none of the disciples seem to have understood the allusion at the time, although John remembered and recorded it afterwards.

This day may be taken as the close of our Lord's second year's ministry, which had opened with mercy at the Passover in the healing of the paralytic at Bethesda, and had been spent in works of love and might. During its course he had chosen His apostles, and revealed the nature of His kingdom to an attentive multitude in the Sermon on the Mount. But the year was closing in shadow; those who had followed Him enthusiastically were falling away because they were offended, and others were showing that they cared rather for the exhibition of marvels than for His teaching. From this time forth the enmity and suspicion that had already dogged His footsteps were to grow more and more until they ended in His death.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON THE BORDERS OF THE HEATHEN WORLD.

THE third Passover that occurred during the ministry of Jesus was at hand, but He did not go up to attend it; He would not walk in Judæa, St. John tells us, because the Jews sought to kill Him. The hostility that prevailed between Himself and the leading party of the nation had, as we have seen, grown in intensity during these past months of Galilean ministry, and the news that was now carried to Jerusalem by the Passover pilgrims of the feeding of the five thousand, and the wish of the people to make Him a king, caused a fresh deputation of Pharisees and Scribes to appear at Capernaum. They were anxious to seize every possible ground of accusation against Jesus, and soon found one in the fact that His disciples omitted the elaborate purification before eating which Rabbinical tradition deemed necessary. This was no question of mere cleanliness, but of the most complicated washing, repeated many times, to avoid the possibility of having contracted any ceremonial taint.

'Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?' Yes, this was the constant ground of complaint. Jesus had come to show that there was something more precious than the tradition of the elders—the law of God in its original purity and integrity. Addressing them sternly as 'hypocrites,' He applied to them the words of the prophet Isaiah:

WASHING HANDS IN THE EAST.

'This people honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.'

He went on to confront them with a special instance of this lip-service. God had commanded, 'Honor thy

father and thy mother,' but they had instituted a law to the effect that, instead of supporting parents in their need, as the spirit of this command inculcates, a man might say the part of his property which thus would be claimed was 'Corban,' that is, given to God; exempting himself thereby from his filial duty.

Was not this detestable hypocrisy? Jesus did not often use sarcasm, but on this occasion his indignation impels Him to do so. 'Full well do ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your traditions.' A man might, forsooth, let an aged father or mother want, so long as he rubbed his fist into the hollow of his hand in the correct method while washing! Turning away from these hypocrites—these actors in religion—Jesus called unto Him the multitude, who perhaps were watching at a respectful distance the discussion between Him and those whom they had been trained to look upon with awe and admiration.

'Hear Me, all of you, and understand!' cried he to them. 'There is nothing from without the man that going into him, can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man.'

It is not easy for us to realize the deep significance of these words to their hearers. They struck at the root of the elaborate ceremonial law. Hitherto the utmost care had been taken that everything eaten should be 'clean.' Jesus proclaimed that such things were of no importance, compared with the evil thoughts and acts which proceed from the heart.

So He explained it later to His disciples, removing by His words the ban that had been laid upon certain

sorts of food. 'This He said, making all meats clean.' How much misery might have been avoided if His words, in this matter of everyday usage, had been universally received! For instance, the whole system of caste in India is bound up with the observance of these distinctions of eating and drinking, and the Indian Mutiny, with all its horrors, arose out of the fact that the Sepoys were required, in biting cartridges, to taste something forbidden by their creed.

True religion is that of the inner life alone, and goodness of the heart is all that God regards. But that was not the God whom the Scribes and Pharisees believed in! Jesus came to reveal Him, but they were obstinate.

'Let them alone,' were His terrible words; 'they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit.'

Jesus now left Capernaum for a time—partly, it may be conjectured, because Herod Antipas had come back to his palace at Tiberias, and danger was apprehended from his inquiries after Jesus; partly because He wished for the undisturbed intercourse with His apostles which He had failed to secure on His recent visit to the neighborhood of Bethsaida Julias. He crossed with His disciples the northern boundary of Galilee, traversing a rough upland country, with the snowy heights of Lebanon in view, and reached the seaboard of Phœnicia,[1] where He hoped for rest. But

[1] The 'Land of Palms,' a name given to it by the Greeks.

His fame had penetrated even into this heathen territory before Him, and He could not be hid.[1] A woman of the country,[2] who spoke the Greek tongue, followed Him, and besought Him to have mercy on her little daughter, 'who had an unclean spirit.' So great was her importunity that the disciples urged Him to grant her request and dismiss her; but he answered them, 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

Strange words for Jesus to utter! and stranger was the reply He gave to the mother as she knelt at His feet and poured out her passionate entreaty:

'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs.'

What made Him speak thus coldly and harshly? We know that his infinite love embraced all mankind alike, and that in after times the Gentile heard the Gospel message more readily than the Jew. It may have been to give the disciples a practical lesson on the ugliness of Jewish exclusiveness; it may have been to test the faith of the woman herself. Certain it is that He meant from the first, discerning her faith, to grant her petition. With touching humility she accepted the comparison, and continued her plea on

[1] From Mark iii. 8 and Luke vi. 17 it is evident that the dwellers about Tyre and Sidon had heard His teaching and seen His miracles.

[2] 'Syro-Phœnician,' i. e. a Phœnician of Syria, as distinguished from a Phœnician of the colony of Carthage, in Africa. Matthew calls her a Canaanitish woman, in allusion to the descent from the ancient Canaanites.

the strength of it: 'Yea, Lord; even the dogs [1] under the table eat of the children's crumbs.'

No longer was she kept in suspense. Jesus exclaimed, 'O woman, great is thy faith; be it done to thee even as thou wilt.'

This was the second time a heathen had applied to Jesus, and in both instances He had warmly commended the faith that was shown. The woman went home, like the centurion of Capernaum, in trustful gladness, and found her daughter lying on the bed, weak, doubtless, from the struggle, but free from her terrible malady.

We do not know how long Jesus remained in this part of the country. Perhaps he visited the famous port of Tyre, with its warehouses and splendid public buildings, and Sidon, situated on a promontory running out from gardens and palm trees, busy with its world-famed fisheries of the murex, from which the purple dye was obtained. Both cities were populous and flourishing, but the fair groves which waved beside them enclosed heathen shrines, and it must have saddened the Saviour's heart to behold so much eagerness and activity mingled with utterly perverted ideas of God.

Jesus and His disciples soon turned away again towards His accustomed haunts and traversing the

[1] Lit., 'the little dogs,' which were accustomed to prowl about the streets, and, creeping in through the open doors of Eastern houses, to pick up morsels from the floor. The dog was the symbol of uncleanness in the East, never the pet and companion of man, as in Europe. Hence the term signified exclusion from the favored nation.

beautiful gorge that the Leontes has made for itself through the mountain range of Lebanon,[1] He reached the Jordan. Upon its further bank He travelled southwards into the district of Decapolis, which was a confederacy of ten cities, rebuilt and colonized by the Romans, and subject only to the Governor of Syria. He seems to have been favorably received in this half-heathen part of the country, and in one of the cities He was entreated to heal a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech. With the accompaniment of visible signs He performed the miracle of healing,[2] sighing as He did so—perchance over the burden and sorrow of human life.

Great was the excitement produced by this cure, although Jesus had told the man not to publish abroad what had been done. Crowds followed Him to the high ground overlooking the Sea of Galilee, probably near the ravine now called the Wady Semakh, on the eastern shore. They brought with them the lame, the dumb, the maimed, and blind, and besought from the Great Physician healing, which was readily granted.

[1] The Leontes is one of the four great rivers of Palestine which flow from Lebanon—'a likeness in this respect of the primeval Paradise, to which local traditions have always endeavored to attach themselves.'—*Stanley.* The others are the Orontes, the Barada (O. T. Abana or Pharpar), and the Jordan.

[2] The word *Ephphatha* was in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect of Hebrew, i. e. Aramaic. Other expressions in the same tongue, which Mark has preserved from Peter's report, are *Talitha cumi; Abba: Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani.* He interprets them because his Gospel was written for Romans, who would not understand Aramaic.

'He hath done all things well!' cried the grateful people; and their exclamation has found its echo down the ages until now.

Three days the multitude remained with Jesus in the lonely highlands. By the end of the time their stock of food was exhausted, and as many of them came from far, He would not dismiss them fasting, 'lest they should faint in the way.' He called His disciples to Him for consultation; but so well did they know His sparing use of His powers that they dared not suggest to Him a repetition of the former miracle. Although He had been constantly attended by crowds, He had only once fed them, and had afterwards rebuked those who followed Him about expecting Him to do so a second time. Once again, however, He brought forth the resources of His companions in the shape of seven loaves and a few small fishes; then bade them distribute the multiplied food to the seated people. About four thousand men, besides women and children, partook of a plentiful meal, and at its close the disciples gathered seven rope-baskets full of fragments. The grateful crowd dispersed without the tumult that had followed the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus crossed in a boat to Magadan, probably at the south-east corner of the plain of Gennasareth. [1]

Here He was not left long in peace. His foes, the Pharisees, with whom for the first time some of the

[1] The 'parts of Dalmanutha' (Mark viii. 10), or Magadan (Matt. xv. 39, R. V.). Nothing is known of any place bearing either of these names, but their site is supposed to be nearly identical with El Mejdel, a miserable collection of hovels on the south-west side of the lake. See note, p. 183.

RUINS AT TELL HUM, THE SITE OF CAPERNAUM.

Sadducees were joined, came to meet Him, doubtless from Capernaum, and began to worry Him for a 'sign.' They knew from past experience that He would not gratify their request, and they hoped to use the refusal to His discredit with the people. He answered them with a rebuke for their hypocrisy and inability to discern the signs of the times, and used the same reference to the prophet of Nineveh that He had employed on a past occasion. As He spake He sighed deeply. Was it because He knew that His ministry in these familiar scenes was well-nigh over? The shadow of rejection was falling ever more darkly athwart His heroic spirit, and, heavy-hearted at the persistent opposition that dogged His steps, He 'left them and departed.'

Again He entered His ship, and bade the disciples direct their course towards Bethsaida Julias on the east shore of the lake. In the hurry of their unexpected re-embarking they had forgotten to take with them more than one loaf. Jesus, we may suppose, was musing deeply on His hostile reception, and when he suddenly said, 'Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees,'[1] they thought, with some obtuseness, He was referring to their lack of provisions. He set them right, censuring their hardness and literalism, and also the want of faith which, after the miracles they had witnessed, made them anxious about the scarcity of food. They now began to see what He meant by the 'leaven,' i.e. the teaching of the Pharisees

[1] Or 'the leaven of Herod' (Mark viii. 15). The partisans of Herod were mostly Sadducees.

and Sadducees, which had corrupted the pure bread of Scripture truth.

At Bethsaida Julias, Jesus cured a blind man something after the manner in which He healed the deaf mute in Decapolis. There was the same lack of the spontaneity and swiftness which characterized His earlier miracles; and when the gradual cure was accomplished, Jesus bade the man go home, not even entering Bethsaida on His way. Then He journeyed northwards again, and finally, with His disciples, paused at Cæsarea Philippi.[1]

[1] That is, Philip's Cæsarea, to distinguish it from Herod's Cæsarea on the Mediterranean. Its modern name is Banias, formely Paneas, because the cave under the hill had been turned into a grotto to the Greek god Pan.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

THE little company of the Saviour and His disciples penetrated into a lovely recess in the mountain land. Over green turf their footsteps led them, among luxuriant trees, with the snowy summit of Hermon in view until they approached too near to see it. Then from a terrace above them on the hillside rose Cæsarea Philippi. The sound of hurrying waters was never silent; from the foot of a lofty cliff overhanging the town many springs burst forth, which, after gathering in a large pool, sped through the leafy thicket below in one rushing stream. This is the eastern source of the Jordan, and still forms the chief attraction of this fair spot, where ruins now look down on olive-groves, waters, and plain.

A recent traveller says: 'Everywhere there is a wild medley of cascades, mulberry-trees, fig-trees, dashing torrents, festoons of vines, bubbling fountains, reeds and ruins, and the mingled music of birds and waters.'[1]

[1] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 586.

It was in this beautiful region that a deeply solemn event took place, finally marking the crisis in our Lord's ministry of which mention has been made. He had led His disciples into this sylvan retreat that He might speak to them of His mysterious purpose; but first of all He must prove their faith. After He had been praying in solitude awhile, He said to His disciples:

'Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?'[1]

They replied that some said He was John the Baptist, which was in fact the theory originated by the guilty conscience of Herod. Others thought He was Elijah, in accordance with the prophecy in Mal. iv. 5. Others again believed Him to be a second Jeremiah, or one of the old prophets risen from the dead. No one among 'the multitudes' had a true appreciation of His nature.

'But who say ye that I am?' asked the Saviour.

Humanly speaking, the future of Christianity depended on the answer which should be given to this question by those who were to preach the doctrine of the Cross, and to be the founders of the universal Church of Christ.

From Peter, the spokesman, as usual, came the undoubting reply:

'Thou art the CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD.'

This confession, in which the Master was recognized as the Messiah, the Anointed One, and the SON OF GOD, in response to His own words SON OF MAN, has been called the first Apostles' Creed. Jesus approved it, and answered:

[1] The Son of man is a title applied eighty times in the Gospels by our Lord to Himself, but never given Him by another (save Acts vii. 56).

'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I also say unto thee that thou art Peter (*Petros*), and on this rock (*petra*) I will build My Church,[1] and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

This reply has been understood in many different ways. What does 'this rock' mean? Some have supposed that Jesus pointed to Himself as He uttered the words, but that construction is forced and unnatural. Others again regard it as referring to Peter. If so, it can only be in connection with his Master and the rest of the apostles; but the third interpretation, that it referred to the confession just uttered, seems the correct one. By the acceptance of the truth of the Divine Nature of Jesus, Peter becomes the 'Man of Rock,' one of the chief foundation-stones of the mighty edifice, the Church of Christ,[2] which was to be erected on the foundation of that truth, against which the 'gates of Hades,'[3] or powers of the unseen world of evil, were never to

[1] If our Lord spoke in Aramaic He would say, 'Thou art "Kepha," and on this "kepha" I will build My Church.'

[2] The word here used for Church (ἐκκλησία) only occurs in one other place in the Gospels (Matt. xviii. 17). It signifies the whole company of believers in the Saviour.

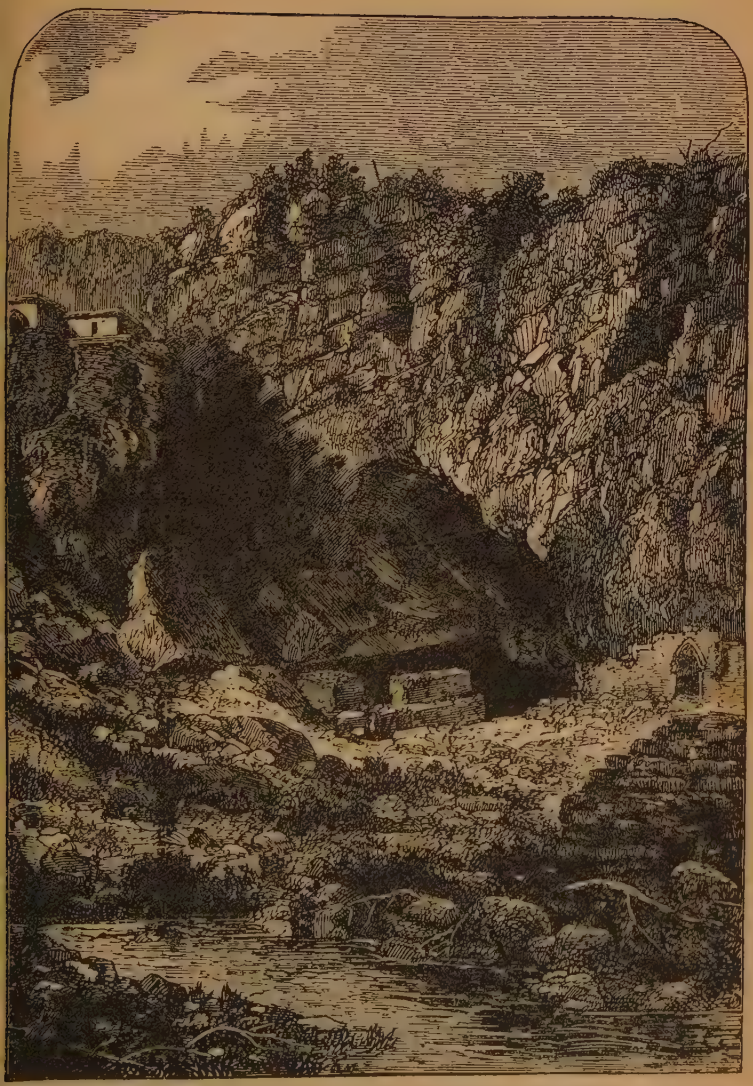
[3] Gate is a symbol of power; for instance, we speak of the Turkish sovereignty as the Ottoman *Porte*.

prevail. The power to bind and loose[1] was afterwards (Matt. xviii. 18) given to all the apostles: a fact which of itself would refute the Romish theory of the primacy of Peter. They were to administer and manage all things in the earthly kingdom, and as they were to be Divinely directed, their decisions would carry with them heavenly authority.

But Jesus forbade them to reveal the mighty truth they had grasped. Their knowledge was as yet very incomplete, and the public declaration that He was the Messiah would have raised popular tumult in Galilee of a kind utterly at variance with the spirit of His mission. At present He was to be known only by those to whose spiritual insight His teaching, confirmed by His miracles, appealed; and not till after His resurrection and the descent of the Holy Spirit would He be proclaimed as the 'Christ, the Son of the living God.'

The dividing-point in the ministry of Jesus was marked by the confession of Peter and by the Transfiguration. Hitherto He has appeared as a Teacher, spreading abroad the Gospel of the kingdom of God, travelling through Galilee with rare visits to Jerusalem, attended by enthusiastic throngs, and working miracles to attest His Divine authority. But now He begins to speak freely to His disciples of His approaching sufferings at Jerusalem, which before He has only once or

[1] According to the great Rabbinical authority, Maimonides, upon the appointment of a teacher it was said to him, 'We give thee power to bind and to loose.' When a Rabbi was appointed a key was delivered to him.—*Stier.*



ANIAS, THE SITE OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI, AND THE SOURCE OF THE JORDAN.

twice shadowed forth in dim and ambiguous phrases;[1] all other aims are subordinate to His solemn purpose, that He must go thither to die.

Peter seems to have been shocked and indignant at the prophecy. It ill accorded with his idea of the shining path that should be trodden by the Son of God, and in ignorant zeal he drew his Master aside and began to expostulate with Him. 'Be it far from thee, Lord,' he exclaimed; 'this shall never be unto Thee.'

The apostle who so lately, in connection with his great confession, had been honored by the name of 'rock' is now, in the same figure of speech, called a 'stone of stumbling' by the Master who had lately commended him. Before all the disciples Jesus reproved him for his indiscreet presumption.[2]

'Get thee behind Me, Satan!'[3] The words were the same as those Jesus used to the Tempter in the wilderness, for Peter's argument was the same. He was tempting Jesus to spoil His life-work for mankind by selfish considerations.

Then the Lord went on to draw some of His most

[1] Matt. x. 38; John iii. 14.

[2] Peter evidently has the comparison still in his mind when he warns the readers of his first Epistle against those to whom the chief corner-stone has, through unbelief, become a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence (*πέτρα σκανδάλου*, 1 Pet. ii. 8). His humility may be inferred from the fact that it is Mark, writing under his direction who records the publicity of the rebuke (viii. 33) and also omits the preceding words of commendation.

[3] Or 'adversary.' Satan does not convey the *extreme* harshness which it has to modern ears.

beautiful and significant teaching from what had occurred. Even in this sequestered region there were often groups of people following a little way behind Him ready to come at His call, and this was the case to-day. Summoning them to Him, He revealed to them the sacred duty of self-sacrifice; and then, as if to cheer their hearts, told them that some who were then present should not taste of death until they saw His kingdom come with power. In this prediction He was doubtless foretelling His spiritual rule, which should begin on the day of Pentecost.

For a week[1] after this memorable conversation Jesus and His disciples remained in the neighborhood of Cæsarea. The breezy slopes and wooded glens of that region, with the giant peaks of Hermon rising behind the terraced foreground, and the song of rushing waters from the thicket, must have made it a scene of much refreshment to the weary workers. Jesus loved the mountain-land, and though we have no details of the week thus spent, we may conclude that He found in the pure exhilarating air and loveliness of nature the rest which we have watched Him vainly seeking on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

At last arrived the climax for which those calm days had been a preparation. In the evening Jesus climbed the slopes of Hermon, attended by the three who seem to form the inner circle of His disciples—Peter,

[1] Matthew and Mark say 'after six days.' Luke says, 'about eight days after.' The former omit, the latter includes, the first and last day of the eight.

James, and John. On the lonely mountain-side He knelt as was His wont, absorbed in silent prayer; but His disciples were weary, and lying down on the grass wrapped in their outer robes they quickly fell asleep.

But they were suddenly awakened, and beheld an awful and glorious sight. Their Lord was before them in celestial radiance. Such brightness streamed from His presence that His very garments were of dazzling light, whiter than the snowfields that gleamed afar on the mountain top:[1] and His face shone as the sun. He was not alone; two unfamiliar forms were by His side. Moses and Elijah had left awhile their home in heaven to talk with him in whom was the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets which they represented. And the theme of their speech was the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.

The disciples were bewildered, amazed at the confusion of their sudden waking to such glory; but Peter, fearing that the vision was about to vanish, cried out: 'Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah!' It was a wild suggestion, thus to detain

[1] The tradition, dating from the fourth century, that Tabor was the scene of the Transfiguration, is now proved almost conclusively to be incorrect. The oblong platform that crowns the top of that hill had been used as a position of warlike defence from the earliest times (Josh. xix, 12; Judges iv. 6), and less than thirty years after the Transfiguration, Josephus strengthened the existing fortress of Itaburion in a town upon its summit. There could not have been the solitude here that Jesus sought; besides, Tabor was in Galilee, and Jesus did not 'pass through Galilee' (Mark ix. 30) till afterwards. Almost all modern travellers decide for Hermon.

the heavenly visitants in booths upon the slopes of Hermon; but Peter had yet to learn that the truest glorification of his Master was to come through the bitter Cross, with two thieves, rather than with Moses and Elijah on either hand.

As he uttered these words, 'not knowing what he said,' a cloud of light rested upon them, whence came a voice, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.' In fear and wonder they fell on their faces to escape from that unknown brightness, that awful sound. Then, venturing to raise their eyes and look around them, they saw that Jesus was alone again. The brilliancy of enfolding cloud and radiant appearance had vanished; and He, His own familiar self once more, came and touched them, saying, 'Arise, and be not afraid.'

The Divine witness to Jesus had been pronounced once before, at His baptism. Then the words were a prelude to His ministry. Now, at the crisis marking the division of His life-work, they are heard again, as a consecration to His suffering. And the addition, 'Hear ye Him,' is to be understood as marking a distinction between Moses and Elijah and Himself. Hitherto the Law and the Prophets have alone been recognized by the devout Jew as the revelation of the Divine; now they find their end in Jesus, who was foreshadowed and foretold by both.[1]

The Transfiguration was over; the disciples and their Lord were on the silent hill with the starry quiet

[1] Heb. i. 1; iii. 5.

heaven above them, and no trace remained of the glorious vision save the indelible impression on the three witnesses.

When the day dawned they descended the slopes of Hermon together, and Jesus bade them tell no man what they had seen until He had risen from the dead. What could the 'rising from the dead' mean? They could not understand, and questioned among themselves; but one thing, the injunction of silence, was plain, and they obeyed it. There was a question that weighed on their minds which they ventured to ask their Master. On that mysterious night they had seen Elijah, and they were trying to reconcile the vision with the teaching of the Scribes, founded on Mal. iv. 5, 6, that Elijah must come to prepare the way of the Messiah whom they knew to be Jesus. He explained to them that the second Elijah had indeed come, and had not been recognized, but had suffered the same fate which would be the portion of Him whose way he prepared. Then they understood that He was speaking to them of John the Baptist, His great forerunner.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE RETURN TO CAPERNAUM.

WHEN Jesus descended from Hermon with something of the glory of the Transfiguration still lingering about His sacred form, He and His disciples encountered a strange contrast to that radiant vision on the heights. Gathered at the foot of the mountain was a noisy and agitated crowd, in the center of which the remaining disciples were engaged in altercation with some of the Scribes.[1] As Jesus was seen approaching, the majesty of His appearance struck them with amazement;[2] they broke asunder and hurried to Him with salutations.

'What question ye with them?' asked He of the Scribes, concerning the suddenly interrupted dispute

[1] Neander says that the presence of the Scribes seems to point out some Galilean hill as the scene of the Transfiguration, but there were many Jews mingled with the population of Cæsarea Philippi, and therefore, doubtless, Scribes would be found among them.

[2] His face, like that of Moses (Ex. xxxiv. 30), seems to have glowed with celestial brightness.

with the disciples. They did not answer, but a man rushed out from the crowd, and kneeling before Jesus explained eagerly that his only son was subject to epilepsy and mania of the most violent description. He had brought the sufferer to the disciples, but they had failed to cast out the evil spirit that was supposed to be the cause of the malady, and the Scribes were taunting them with their powerlessness.

With a heavy sigh of grief and disappointment over the weakness of the disciples' faith, the idle curiosity of the multitude, the malice of the Scribes, Jesus bade the father bring his son to Him. The sufferer was at once seized with a frightful paroxysm, and rolled foaming on the ground. Jesus asked his father how long he had been thus afflicted, and was told that it dated from childhood, and that the victim had often narrowly escaped death by falling into fire and into water; 'but,' he added, 'if Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us!'

'If *thou* canst!' Jesus repeated, re-echoing the words of the suppliant. 'All things are possible to him that believeth.'

The agonized father broke out into the entreaty that has since gone up from countless hearts, 'Lord I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.' Jesus would not reject his faith, imperfect though it might be, for the prayer had in it the germ of all true spiritual life—consciousness of the need of help, and a trembling outreaching towards Divine mercy.

Meanwhile the crowd was increasing. Jesus unwilling to protract the scene, bade the spirit of evil depart

from the sufferer, and after a still more terrible convulsion the lad lay as one lifeless upon the ground. 'He is dead!' cried the multitude; but the merciful Healer took him by the hand and delivered him to his father, restored and calm.

The disciples had received the power of casting out evil spirits, and could not understand why they should fail on this occasion, so they took the first opportunity of asking Jesus the cause of their inability to heal the boy. Their Master had foreborne to expose them before the crowd, but now told them quietly and gently that their unbelief was the reason, and added striking words as to the power of perfect faith, drawing a similitude from the huge mass of Hermon before them, with its forest-clad ridges sweeping down from the giant dome behind.

We need not wonder at His statement that faith should 'remove mountains,'[1] or deem it applicable only to apostolic days. Who are the men who sway multitudes by a word—who sweep away monstrous piles of prejudice and error—who lift the world higher towards the Divine Ideal by their speech and life? Surely those who *believe*—who know they have a message from Heaven, and bear it undauntedly, in the face of all opposition, till the ranks of worldly selfishness shrink and wonder at their power.

From the beautiful mountain country Jesus now

[1] To 'remove mountains' was an Eastern figurative expression for the conquest of great difficulties, and an eminent teacher was sometimes termed 'uprooter of mountains.' See 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

began to turn His steps southward again. Once more He entered Galilee, but it was not for the purpose of public ministry. Rather did He wish to talk in private with His disciples about His coming death and resurrection, and hence He would not have his arrival published abroad to the multitudes who had failed to comprehend Him. He continued the theme which He had begun under the shadow of Hermon; but even yet they were dull of understanding, and on the way, knowing that some great manifestation of their Master was at hand, but failing to recognize the true nature of the Messianic kingdom, they began to dispute among themselves as to the position they each were to occupy in the new realm. Peter, James, and John had been taken up into the mount with Christ; were they then to be greater than the others? Possibly the jealousy caused by this preference was the origin of the quarrel. Jesus observed it, but made no remark until afterwards.

On entering Capernaum they were accosted by the collectors of the Temple tax. This was a sum of half a shekel, equal to about 1*s.* 3*d.* of our money, and demanded yearly from every Jew above the age of twenty.[1] Rich and poor alike paid the same, to show that all souls are equal before God. It was due on the first of Adar, the month before the Passover, corre-

[1] Exod. xxx. 11–16. After the captivity (Neh. x. 32) the tax became a voluntary offering of one-third of a shekel, but it was subsequently restored to the original amount.

sponding to our February and March,[1] and if it was not paid by the twenty-fifth, the collectors might by law distrain the goods of defaulters. It is, however, unlikely that this was strictly carried out in the time of Christ, and as He had been away from Galilee, with rare exceptions, almost ever since the Passover, the tax might well have escaped collection in His case. Now, however, He had returned to Capernaum, and the tax-gatherer, addressing Peter as a well-known resident in the city and prominent disciple, inquired: 'Doth your Master pay the half-shekel?'

'Yes,' answered Peter, with his usual unthinking readiness. On entering the house Jesus at once put to him the question, 'What thinkest thou, Simon? The kings of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute? from their sons or from strangers?'

'From strangers,' he replied.

'Therefore the sons are free,' said Jesus. He, the Son of God, 'for whose appearance the whole Temple discipline was but preparatory,'[2] was not bound to pay this tax, nor would He have been asked for it, had His mission been recognized.

He would not, however, throw a difficulty in the way of those who might misunderstand His refusal. After the long journey into the north the means of the little company, never abundant, became exhausted; but St. Matthew tells us that Jesus bade Peter resort to the

[1] There seems, however, to be some evidence that the tax might be paid at any one of the three great feasts. (Greswell, *Dissert.* ii. 377.)

[2] Neander, *Life of Christ*, p. 318.

THE TRIBUTE MONEY. (*From a panel by George Tinworth.*)

ordinary means of his craft, when the fish first drawn up should supply money enough for both to pay the tax, in the form of a stater it had swallowed.

When the disciples and Jesus were all together in the house at Capernaum, He asked them what had been the subject of their conversation on the journey. Remembering their ambitious and foolish wrangling, they were ashamed to reply; but He sat down, and once more showed them that humility is the basis of true greatness. Then, calling a little child into the midst of them, He took it in His arms and told them that, unless they became humble like that little one, they could not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Not enter in! And only a short time ago they had been disputing who should be the highest dignitary in that kingdom whose true nature they so faintly understood. Once more their patient Teacher had to show them that the qualifications for membership of the kingdom were spiritual, and that the humblest was the greatest therein. In the Sermon on the Mount He had said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;' and once again He enforced the lesson, telling them they were to become as children in humility and trust, and that whoever received one such 'little child' in His name received Him, and the Father who sent Him.

At this point John seems to have interposed a question. He and some of the other disciples had met a man who was healing demoniacs in the name of Jesus, and had forbidden him, because he was not one of the Twelve. Jesus, however, told them they were wrong;

a man who could work a cure in His name could not lightly speak evil of Him. 'He that is not against Me is for Me.' [1]

With the little one still in His arms, Jesus went on to speak of the value of the souls of His young disciples, and the terrible guilt of any who should mislead them. In stern though figurative language He urged His hearers to sacrifice any taste, and pleasant use of hand or foot or eye, rather than be tempted and led astray thereby. By the fire of self-denial every soul must be purified, just as every sacrifice is salted with salt. 'Have salt in yourselves,' He said, 'and be at peace one with another.'

This subject led Him to describe the way in which they should deal with an offending brother. Peter, perhaps with the memory fresh in his mind of some sharp speech caused by jealousy of the recent distinction conferred on him by Jesus, wanted to know exactly how often he was to forgive his brother; would seven times be too many? Not until seven times, was the answer; but until seventy times seven.

Here follows one of the Saviour's most beautiful

[1] Once before (Matt. xii. 30) Jesus said, 'He that is not with Me is against Me.' There is not a contradiction in the two expressions, although it may seem so to the casual reader. In the former instance Jesus is speaking of the expulsion of evil spirits by the Jewish exorcists in whom there was no germ of sympathy with Him; but in the latter He refers to the same act done in His name, where the agent though imperfectly instructed, had a beginning of faith. Outward neutrality may be inwardly friendly or hostile. If the former, it will not remain neutrality.

parables. A servant, who had been forgiven by his king a debt of ten thousand talents,[1] went out and seized by the throat a fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence—more than a million times less than his own forgiven debt—saying, 'Pay me that thou owest.' Refusing to listen to his debtor's entreaties, or take into account his inability to pay, he flung him into prison; but his lord was angry at the cruel conduct, and pointed out that he should have rendered to others a share of the mercy he had so freely received.

So we, who are forgiven an untold debt of sin by our merciful Father in heaven, may well be lenient and forgiving to those who offend us on earth. Such was the simple and beautiful lesson that ends our Saviour's discourse.

[1] As a talent was a measure of weight, not a sum, it is difficult to fix its precise amount. A Jewish silver talent equalled 3,000 shekels, or about 341*l.* 10*s.* A golden talent was sixteen times as much. The sum, however reckoned, is enormous, while a hundred pence or denarii was about 3*l.* or 4*l.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

IT is evident that Jesus did not stay long in Capernaum at this time. The Feast of Tabernacles[1] was drawing nigh, and all the neighborhood was astir, for large caravans of pilgrims always repaired to Jerusalem to keep the joyous festival. Falling in the month Tisri, corresponding to the end of September or early October, the feast was a 'Harvest Home,' for the cornfield, vineyard and oliveyard had yielded up their fruits; and it was also intended to commemorate the time when the Israelites dwelt in tents in the wilderness. Hence for seven days those who kept the feast lived in booths twined of olive, palm, myrtle, and pine boughs; and the priests performed solemn rites in the Temple. Daily the Law was read, and the Temple trumpets sounded forth twenty-one triumphant blasts. All was brightness and rejoicing in Jerusalem; and doubtless the feast owed

[1] For details of this feast, see Exod. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 34-43; Numb. xxix. 12-38; Deut. xvi. 13-15; Neh. viii. 15.

something of its gladness to the contrast with the solemn 'Day of Atonement' for the sins of the people, which fell five days earlier.

Capernaum then was astir and busy with pilgrims preparing for the journey to the capital. The brethren of Jesus, of whom we know so little, now appear again upon the scene. More than a year and a half of beneficent work in Galilee had failed to convince them of His Divine mission, and having once unsuccessfully attempted to confine Him as being beside Himself, they now try raillery in the form of sober expostulation. 'If you really have a message from on high,' they seem to have said, 'do not linger here in the north of the country. Like other Jews, go up to the feasts you have so long neglected, and at Jerusalem on this occasion make some public demonstration that shall provoke attention. If you wish to be known, act before the world.'

Jesus quietly declined to comply with their advice, 'His hour was not yet come.' So His brothers departed without Him, doubtless uttering many words of blame and criticism on the way to one another concerning their unworldly kinsman. When they reached Jerusalem the gay and eager crowd who thronged the streets, bearing palm-branches[1] bound with willow, and carrying citrons and peaches as a sign of rejoicing, besieged them with the question, 'Where is He?' No longer comparatively obscure and unknown, as He had been at the time of His last visit to Jerusalem, Jesus had

[1] This bunch of branches was called a 'lûlâb.'

now made a name to Himself throughout the regions where He taught, and the Galilean pilgrims especially must have looked for His appearance. There was much discussion among the people concerning Him. 'He is a good man,' said some. 'Not so, but He leadeth the multitude astray,' objected others. None cared to risk an open statement of opinion concerning Him, while the leading men of the nation had not made known their final verdict.

The brethren of Jesus could only reply to the many inquiries about Him by saying He was not with them; but suddenly He was found in one of the Temple colonnades. Quietly, by an unfrequented route, and probably unattended, He had come up to the feast, and was now teaching the people.

Murmurs and cavilling were not long in making themselves heard among the Priests and Scribes. 'How can this man be fit to occupy the post of a Rabbi?—he has never learned.' Jesus answered them that His teaching came from above, and that they too could judge respecting that heavenly lore if they would do God's will. He asked them why they sought to kill Him. The wish to take His life had been known only to a few of His hearers, who kept silence, while the crowd roughly exclaimed, 'Thou hast a devil; who seeketh to kill Thee?'

Jesus did not notice the question, but spoke of the work on the Sabbath-day which had marked His last visit to Jerusalem and had raised such a storm of opposition. He went on to condemn the want of sincerity and the hypocritical formalism with which His hearers kept the

letter but disregarded the spirit of the law of Moses, as had been shown in the outcry against the healing of the paralytic on the Sabbath, and had in subsequent incidents formed the ground of the Pharisees' hostility against Him.

His words made a deep impression on the listening throng, and some asked themselves, 'Is this He whom they seek to kill? Can He be the Christ, and do the rulers know it now, and therefore refrain from seizing Him? No; He cannot be; for we know where He comes from, and when Messiah comes no one will know His origin.' So they reasoned; but Jesus told them, as though to expose the vanity of their speculations, that though they knew Him, and knew whence He came, in another sense they did *not* know, for He came from One whom they did not comprehend. Many believed on Him as they heard these words; but, on the other hand, the members of the Sanhedrin were exasperated, and bade the Temple-guard watch their opportunity for seizing Him.

Jesus continued to speak to the people, telling them in mystical language that He was to remain but a little while with them, and that then they should seek Him and find Him not, nor be able to follow Him. They could not understand, but had some confused idea that He meant He was going to preach among the Greeks.

Meanwhile the feast went on. Day by day the trumpets sounded and the joyous pilgrims thronged to the Temple service, where the sacrifice was laid on the altar, and one of the priests, attended by a procession

of worshippers, fetched water in a golden ewer from the pool of Siloam. Returning through the 'water-gate' of the Temple, he was met by another priest carrying wine for the drink-offering. The two poured the water and wine separately down silver funnels on the altar, while the choir sang the Great Hallel (Psalms cxiii. cxviii.) and the worshippers waved their palm-branches in triumph. 'He who has not seen the joy of the water-drawing does not know what true gladness means,'[1] the Rabbis used to say; and processions, illuminations, and dances in the evening testified to the rapture of the people.

On the eighth and last day,[2] 'that great day of the feast,' when the rejoicing reached its climax, the priest had poured forth the water, and the people had chanted the Hallel, when a Voice was heard crying in the Temple:

'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink!

Beautiful and significant was the use of the glad water-drawing that the eager throng had witnessed day by day, as a type of the blessed gift of living water with which Jesus could crown their rejoicing. Full well He knew the thirst of every human heart for that which the world can never supply, but which He was able to satisfy to the very utmost by the knowledge of Himself.

[1] The origin of this ceremony of water-drawing is not known, but it contains an allusion to Isa. xii. 3.

[2] Neh. viii. 18.

In figurative language He publicly described the outpouring of blessing that should result from the belief in Him by a few disciples. The multitude were struck by utterances which seemed to appeal to their inmost needs. Among the listeners were the officers of the Temple-guard who had been sent to lay hands on Him, and who, spell-bound by His words, could not fulfil the errand on which they were bent. 'He is a prophet,' some of the people were saying. Others again thought He was the Christ; but to this was opposed the difficulty that the Messiah was to spring from Bethlehem, while Jesus, as they imagined, was a native of Galilee. Meanwhile the officers went their way to the Sanhedrin, who impatiently awaited their tardy arrival.

'Why did ye not bring Him?' they angrily ejaculated; but the men answered in self-defence, 'Never man spake like this man.'

How significant is the reply of the rulers, 'Are ye also led astray? Have any of the rulers believed on Him, or of the Pharisees?' That is a reason that has often been used through past centuries. If the rich, wise and respectable do not patronize a belief, their inferiors have no right to hold it. But truth, notwithstanding the contemptuous words of the Pharisees, has often been on the side of the 'multitude that knoweth not the law.'

Nicodemus, who had treasured in his memory that sacred interview two and a half years before, spoke calmly and reasonably as to the injustice of judging a man unheard. His colleagues had no reply to this, but took refuge in irrational taunts: 'Art thou also of Galilee?

Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.'[1]

The Sanhedrin broke up; every man went to his own house; but Jesus, who always loved to escape from the crowded cities, went to the Mount of Olives, passing the night either in the open air or in the house of some neighboring friend.

The incident which follows is surrounded by difficulties. In many of the oldest MSS. of the New Testament it is missing, while in others it is placed at the end of John's Gospel, or at the close of Luke xxi. Therefore it is enclosed in brackets in the Revised Version. Still it must be given, as it bears upon it the stamp of likeness to the merciful Saviour's treatment of other penitents. In John viii. it is recorded that the next day after the close of the feast Jesus entered the Temple and taught again. While He was so engaged the Scribes and Pharisees brought in a woman who was convicted of sin. They had seen in her guilt a pretext for entrapping Jesus into some avowed hostility to the law of Moses, and under cover of asking His opinion, as it was the custom to consult celebrated Rabbis in cases of difficulty, they dragged her into His presence.

'Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such; what then sayest Thou of her?' they demanded. The Mosaic punishment of death by stoning for such sins had long fallen into disuse, but they hoped to

[1] This was a very ignorant assertion, for Jonah, Nahum, and Hosea had all come out of Galilee.

place Jesus in a dilemma between the apparent condoning of wickedness and the assent, which they knew He would not give, to a cruel and obsolete mode of punishment.

At first He seemed to pay no attention, but stooped and wrote upon the stone pavement.[1] They urged their spiteful and ill-timed importunity, while the wretched woman stood in the midst. At last Jesus raised Himself, and, looking at them, He said:

'He that is without sin among you let him first cast a stone at her.'

It was a memorable reproof, that should for all time condemn the censorious anxiety to blame a fellow-creature, which is one of the ugliest faults of humanity. Sin should to all loyal hearts bring grief and concern for the sinner, not cruel delight in his confusion and punishment. The men were convicted. Self-constituted accusers as they were, they felt they were as guilty as the culprit, and in confusion they slunk away. Jesus was left alone with the cowering, shame-stricken woman who, though she might have escaped, was restrained by an invincible attraction at the feet of the gracious Saviour.

'Where are they?' He asked. 'Did no man condemn thee?'

[1] There has been much discussion as to the meaning of this gesture. Some have seen in it a well-understood sign of reluctance to interfere in the matter; others interpret it as a mute allusion to the tables of stone, written with the finger of God; others, again, say the writing in the dust was a symbol that sin must be forgotten and forgiven.

'No man, Lord,' she tremblingly rejoined.

'Neither do I condemn thee,' was His sentence of benignant mercy; 'go and sin no more.'

Doubtless these words of majesty and forgiveness —not making light of the sin, but breathing hope for the penitent—were never forgotten, and the penitent woman, brought for the first time into contact with perfect purity, led a new life in the remembrance of Him.

On the same day Jesus was teaching in the 'Treasury' of the Temple—that is, in the Court of the Women—where thirteen chests with trumpet-shaped openings received the gifts of the people. Near Him were two gilded candelabra of vast size, the lamps on which shed abroad a far-reaching splendor on the nights of the feast. Perhaps He referred to this custom of illumination, as He had alluded to the water-drawing, when He said:

"I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

The Pharisees taunted Him with having no testimony but His own produce about Himself. But He answered that He had the witness of the Father, displayed in His ministry and life. Sadly he went on to speak of His end, and the time when they would not be able to follow Him whither He went.

Some of the Jews, as they heard these wonderful words, and saw His face radiant with light from within, yielded a wavering belief in Him. This He proceeded to test by telling them that the truth should make them

free. He meant that they should be released from the spiritual slavery of sin; but their national pride caught fire at once. 'We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man!' they exclaimed. Never in bondage to any man? Why, even since the Captivity, the Jews had borne the Persian, Greek, and Syrian yoke, and now they were under the Roman sway. Jesus did not challenge their boast, but calmly went on to explain what He meant, and to prove to them that they were indeed in a state of slavery to sin.

They began to abuse Him, calling Him a Samaritan and a demoniac. He spoke to them of the foresight with which their father Abraham had looked down the ages to His day, rejoicing to see it.

'Thou art not yet fifty years old!'[1] exclaimed the baffled Jews; 'and hast thou seen Abraham?'

Quietly came the grand reply, revealing the pre-existence of our Saviour:

'Before Abraham was, I AM!'

This was too much for the excited, exasperated crowd. Piles of stones were lying near at hand, for use in the yet unfinished building of the Temple. Seizing some of these, they would have hurled them upon Jesus, but He departed unhurt from the scene.

After their first astonishment the Pharisees might boast their victory, and pride themselves on having driven Him from the field, not with their *stones*, but

[1] This implies generally that Jesus had not reached the full years of manhood. It is nearly certain that He was about thirty-three at this time.

with their *arguments!* He left their blinded pride in possession of this seeming victory. This was the beginning of His submission to His reproach and cross.[1]

[1] Stier.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MAN BORN BLIND.

EITHER as Jesus was leaving the Temple after the attack of the Pharisees or on the following Sabbath, He saw a man who had been blind from his birth sitting at the Temple gates and asking for alms. The disciples began to speculate as to the cause of the affliction, and inquire whether it was due to the man's own sin or that of his parents that he was born blind. Without noticing their supposition that he could have sinned before he was born, Jesus replied it was due to neither cause, checking the disposition to conjectures which might have an uncharitable result. By means of the blindness the works of God should be manifested in him.

In contemplating this miracle Jesus seems to have thought of His coming death. Wonderful, and yet tinged with sadness, are the words, 'The night cometh when no man can work. When I am in the world I am the Light of the world.'

A little while ago He had used the same simile respecting Himself. His hearers would not receive the

message; yet, with or without their discernment, He must, while He was among them shine with Divine glory.

Jesus anointed the man's eyes with clay and bade him go and wash in the pool of Siloam. He obeyed, and came back healed.

His neighbors and friends were amazed when they saw him. Some, indeed, could scarcely recognize the face lit up by sight and gladness for the same that they were accustomed to see, clouded and mutely asking compassion. But the man knew what had been done for him, and gave a clear account of the circumstances.

Like wildfire the report of the miracle ran through the city, and as the Sanhedrin was already strongly stirred about Jesus, this was eagerly caught up by the members. The man who declared that his miraculous cure was due to the Galilean Teacher, was speedily brought before the council in one of the Temple chambers, and questioned as to what had happened. Some of the Pharisees, angry at the deed of Jesus, but unable to deny its reality, took refuge in the fact that it was wrought on the Sabbath-day, and that therefore the Healer was not from God. Others, more candid, saw that the success of the miracle prevented the supposition that the doer was a sinner. Thoroughly baffled, they questioned the man as to what *he* thought of the person who had opened his eyes. 'He is a prophet,' he undoubtingly replied.

As a last resource they summoned the parents and asked them, 'Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?' The father and mother were on their guard against being entrapped

into any dangerous admissions, which might bring penalties from the august Sanhedrin upon them; for they knew it had been agreed that the terrible ban of excommunication, or exclusion from the synagogue, should be pronounced against anyone who acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah. There were three degrees of this punishment, and under the last and worst an excommunicated man was forbidden to worship in public, to converse, eat, or drink with anyone. The parents were naturally alarmed at such a prospect, especially as they were very poor, and they warily answered, 'This certainly is our son, who was born blind; but we know neither how he obtained his sight nor who opened his eyes. He is old enough to speak for himself: ask him.'

Foiled in this quarter, the rulers addressed the man again, hoping, by putting him upon his oath,[1] to frighten him into evading the miracle by owning that Jesus was a sinner. But he was too straightforward for this. "I do not know whether he is a sinner or not: one thing I do know, that whereas I was blind now I see.'

Baffled at every turn, they began once more to cross-examine the beggar; but he was not going to have any more of it. 'I have told you once, and you would not attend; why do you wish to hear it again? do you wish to become his disciples too?'

[1] Such is the force of the expression, 'Give glory to God'—i.e. 'We adjure you, in the sight of God, to tell the truth.' See Josh. vii. 19.

We cannot but admire the shrewdness and sturdy honesty of the man. It irritated the Pharisees, who retorted angrily, but the beggar was more than a match for them. He wisely reasoned that, unless 'this Man' had been from God, He could not have performed a miracle unheard of since the world began.

The idea of an untutored beggar daring to argue on any religious topic with their learned and sacred selves was too much for the haughty members of the Sanhedrin. How their obstinate pride sounds through their words: 'Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach *us?*' With the irrational cruelty of religious fanaticism, they pronounced on him the ban of excommunication from the synagogue, and drove him from their presence. Jesus heard of the sentence, and went with tender compassion to find the outcast.

'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?' He asked him; and to His hearer's astonished inquiry, He rejoined:

'Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee.'[1]

The man, whose experience was enough to convince him, believed, worshipped, and doubtless remained a faithful disciple of the Saviour.

It could not have been long afterwards that Jesus was speaking of the two effects of his teaching: those who saw not He made to see; those who saw He made blind. Some of the Pharisees, who were gener-

[1] Professor Westcott notices the fact that this revelation to the outcast from the synagogue has its only parallel in the similar revelation to the outcast from the nation (John iv. 26).

ally not far away from Jesus, seeking to entrap Him, attracted and yet infuriated, asked Him, 'Are *we* also blind?'

Jesus explained to them that if they had been naturally blind they would not have been to blame; but the guilt of willful moral blindness, combined with the claim to clear moral insight as teachers of the people, was a very different matter. This train of thought led Him on to the beautiful allegory of the Good Shepherd. He represented Himself as the door of the sheepfold, by which all true shepherds of the sheep had entered, while others, climbing up some other way, were but thieves and robbers. Again, He was the true Shepherd who was known by His sheep, and who would lay down His life for their sake—that life which he could take again at His pleasure.

As might be expected, there was great division among those who heard these mysteries. The worldly-minded and fanatical declared roundly that he was a demoniac. Others, more thoughtful and candid, objected that these words of His were not the sayings of one possessed, and they asked, referring to the miracle that was patent to all, 'Can a *devil* open the eyes of the blind?'

So ended the visit of Jesus to the Feast of Tabernacles His life was probably endangered by the hostility He had awakened, and for awhile he withdrew from Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE BEGINNING OF THE LAST JOURNEY.

THE question whether Jesus returned to Galilee after the Feast of Tabernacles has been much debated. St. John, immediately after relating the events recorded in the last chapter, goes on to say, 'It was at Jerusalem, the Feast of the Dedication, and it was winter.' How was this interval between the autumn Feast of Tabernacles and the winter Feast of Dedication filled up?

From St. Luke's Gospel we have evident traces of a solemn journey, or rather progress, from Galilee to Jerusalem, beginning at Luke ix. 51; 'When the days were well-nigh come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before his face.' Other references to this journey are found also in ch. xiii. 22; xvii. 11. Many instances of this episode, which lasts from ix. 51 to xviii. 15, are related by Luke alone; and others by comparison with Matthew and Mark, are evidently misplaced. Matthew (xix. 1) also describes a journey from

[1] For obvious instances of this, compare Luke ix. 57–62 with Matt. viii. 19—22; xi. 1–13 with Matt. vi. 9-15 and vii. 7-12; xi. 14-26 with Matt. ix. 32-35, etc.

Galilee 'into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan,' that is, into Peræa. He does not mention any place again till xx. 29, when Jesus leaves Jericho shortly before His public ride into Jerusalem. Mark's narrative is parallel with Matthew's. John has no mention of what occurred in the two months which must have elapsed between the Feast of Tabernacles and Feast of Dedication.

It is evident then that a journey, not mentioned by John, occupied some part of the last months of the life of Jesus. It was undoubtedly, from Luke's account, a slow and solemn progress, heralded by the mission of the Seventy, and marked by much of our Lord's most instructive teaching; it could not therefore have been the hurried, private journey to the Feast of Tabernacles.[1] Neither could it have taken place after the Feast of Dedication, for then He withdrew into Peræa (John x. 40–42) till the death of Lazarus called Him to Bethany. After the raising of Lazarus He retired to Ephraim, where He abode with His

[1] There are, however, many who identify the journey of Luke ix. 51, with that of John vii. 10, and they conclude that the 'in secret' of the latter refers to the fact that Jesus went through Samaria, agreeing thus with Luke ix. 52. But Josephus says (*Antiq.* XX. vi. 1) that the Galilean pilgrims used to pass through Samaria on their way to the feasts, which destroys the idea that there was any secrecy in the route of Luke ix. 52. Could a journey be 'not openly, but as it were in secret,' when it was heralded by seventy messengers, two and two? Besides, in the rapid transit from Galilee to Judæa of John vii., made, be it remembered, after Christ's brethren had already started, and necessarily hurried to reach Jerusalem for the feast, how could there have been time for the preaching through cities and villages which Luke records? The natural inference seems to be that Luke and John refer to different journeys.

disciples (John xi. 54) till He took His last journey to Jerusalem. The apparent place therefore for the journey of Luke ix. 51 seems to be between the Feast of Tabernacles and Feast of Dedication.

We may therefore conclude with reasonable probability that Jesus withdrew into Galilee after the feast, and doubtless He spent the brief visit in Capernaum. While He was there news was brought Him of the slaughter of certain Galileans. During the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate disturbances were common enough; and on this occasion soldiers from the garrison in the Tower of Antonia, which overlooked the Temple, seem to have rushed down and killed the unhappy people almost in the act of sacrifice. Jesus showed on this occasion the folly and uncharitableness of supposing that all calamities are sent by God to punish sin. Then, by the parable of the Barren Fig-tree, He taught the necessity for national repentance. A strange significance, which seems an allusion to his own ministry, dwells in the words, 'Behold, these *three years* I am seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down; why doth it also cumber the ground?' Yet the vine-dresser in mercy would let it stay awhile, to see if perchance fruit might be found. Once more Jesus was to teach thoughout the country, and give the people who would not receive His word another opportunity of listening to His gracious invitation.

So the final appeal was to be made. Jesus prepared for it by calling together the followers He had gained during His life by the Galilean lake, and choosing

seventy[1] from their number, whom He sent two and two before His face into the cities and villages through which He was to pass on His way. Their instructions are in part like those that were given to the twelve apostles, yet there are differences which arise from the altered circumstances. The Samaritan towns were not excluded, but the mission was chiefly to Peræa, where Jesus meant to spend much of the time that still remained to Him.

Thus He bade farewell to Galilee, and 'steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.' He was not, indeed, to remain in the capital from the time of His arrival until His death; the brief visit to the Feast of Dedication was, so to speak, an episode in the great journey which filled the last months of His life. Sad must His thoughts have been as He quitted these familiar scenes. His ministry on the shores of Gennesareth had opened in brightness and joy, with enthusiastic crowds following His footsteps and hanging on His words. Little by little their ardor had cooled; the people had shown that they cared only for material benefits, and when these were not conferred instantly on their request they were angry, and reckless about the spiritual meaning that lay hidden beneath the deed of mercy. Yet there must have been many hearts true to Jesus in Galilee, in spite of all the coldness and disregard. We may believe that He was followed by many faithful disciples,

[1] Some ancient authorities have seventy-two, thus connecting it with the number of the Sanhedrin. There is the same difference of reading respecting the number of the elders of Israel (Exod. xxiv. 9.)

and bore with Him rich store of loving farewells, as for the last time He bent His steps southward from Capernaum with the Twelve.

Two of the Seventy had been sent into the first Samaritan village[1] at which He would arrive after crossing the plain of Esdraelon; probably En-gannim, or the fountain of Gardens, which lies at the foot of the hills that form the northern boundary of Samaria. They wished to prepare the way for Jesus, but the churlish inhabitants would neither listen to their words nor make the ordinary hospitable preparations for wearied travellers. Jesus was going to Jerusalem; and their hatred to the city was so great that they would not receive Him. James and John impetuously wished to call down fire from heaven and consume them, that the crowd which followed Jesus should be awed and convinced by a signal outburst of vengeance, like that of Elijah of old. But He turned and rebuked them.[2] Little did John think that before long he would be sent to this very province of Samaria, to call down upon the Samaritans another kind of fire from heaven —the vivifying influence of the Holy Spirit.[3]

[1] St. Luke mentions this incident before the choice of the Seventy; but, as has been said, he does not profess to give a strictly chronological narrative. There is no ground for supposing that the expression of ch. i. 3, claims absolute accuracy in order. Rather does he group together facts and discourses by their affinity one with the other.

[2] The words, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them,' are omitted in many ancient manuscripts, and are therefore only inserted in the margin of the Revised Version.

[3] Acts viii. 14-17.

It may perhaps have been at the commencement of His Journey, and after this rejection, that Jesus delivered to the multitude attending him a solemn warning against lightly becoming his professed disciples. They must not follow him unless they were prepared, if need be, to relinquish every earthly tie. By two illustrations—of the man unable through lack of means to finish building his house, and the king entering upon a war without forethought—He warned them to count the cost before they entered upon the life that was required from His followers. 'Whosoever doth not bear his own cross and come after Me,' He added, in words prefiguring that which they could not understand, 'cannot be My disciple.'

Jesus now turned aside into Peræa whither His messengers had already gone before His face, and which therefore lay in the plan of his journey. Down the valley of Bethshean He went, through the cleft of the hills, into the land beyond the Jordan which had afforded a refuge for the shepherd king of old. From those heights David had sighed for the country whence he was driven an exile, a type of his greater Son in days to come.

It must have been on this border land between Samaria and Galilee[1] as He journeyed into Peræa that He met ten lepers, on the outskirts of a village. As soon as they descried him from afar they lifted up their voices, crying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' for

[1] Luke xvii. 11 διὰ μέσου Σ. καὶ Γ. may be translated *between*, not in the *midst of*, Samaria and Galilee.

they recognized Him as the wonderful Healer of Galilee, who had already cured a leper by His merciful touch. At once, without the delay which of late had characterized His miracles, He called to them, 'Go show yourselves to the priests.' What this meant they well knew; they hurried on their way, and as they went they were healed. One only, and that one a Samaritan, had grace to return and give thanks to the Good Physician when he found the hideous disease had vanished. He fell at His feet, pouring out gratitude for having thus been saved from a living death, while the others hastened selfishly on their way. 'Were not the ten cleansed?' asked Jesus, in sorrowful astonishment at so flagrant an instance of thanklessness. "Where are the nine? Were there none that returned to give glory to God save this stranger? Yet He did not let their ingratitude prevent Him from uttering gracious words to the alien that knelt at his feet.

'Arise and go thy way,' said He; 'Thy faith hath saved thee.'

Even in the comparatively secluded region of Peræa Jesus was not to be unmolested. Certain of the Pharisees, perhaps charged with a message from Herod Antipas, came to Him and said, 'Get thee hence; for Herod would fain kill thee.' Whether Herod really meant to do this, or was terrified by the report of the words of Jesus, and wished finally to drive Him from his dominions, we have no certain means of deciding; but the tetrarch, as we have already seen, was weak and superstitious, so that probably the threat was a pretext. This lends a yet more scathing force to the

answer of Jesus, 'Go and say to *that fox*, Behold I cast out devils and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected.'

He knew clearly the end towards which He was travelling, and no threats of Herod Antipas could hasten it. Then with infinite sadness he added, 'I must go on My way to-day and to-morrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.' Full of pathos was His lament that followed over the city, stained with the blood of martyrs in the past, where but lately the Jews had sought to stone Him after His revelation of Himself as the Living Water—the Good Shepherd—the Light of the World.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE MINISTRY IN PERÆA.

IT is significant that during the latter part of the ministry of Jesus He is seldom found teaching in the synagogue, as was His custom at the beginning of His public life. The change may be due to the breach that was widening day by day between Himself and the religious authorities; once, however, during this journey from Galilee, we find Him in a Peræan synagogue on the Sabbath-day. Among the worshippers was a crippled woman, bent double, who had been in this wretched state for eighteen years. Touched to His merciful heart by the sight, He called her to Him, and saying, 'Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity,' He laid His hands upon her, giving her thereby power to lift her bowed form. Praise to God for the wonderful deliverance burst from her lips; but the chief man of the synagogue, instead of sympathizing in her joy, was indignant that a miracle of healing should be performed on the Sabbath-day. He is a ridiculous spectacle of fussy ceremonialism, as he rises and rebukes the congregation generally for their infringement of what he considers the sanctity of

the law: 'Come and be healed during the six days of the week; to allow yourselves to be healed on the seventh is a gross impropriety.' Jesus denounced his hypocrisy with stern indignation, proving to him that even by the law of Moses the act that had been done was righteous. The Jews were permitted to loose their animals from the manger on the Sabbath to take them to the water; and if ox and ass might be freed from a halter that prevented them from slaking their thirst, was not a 'daughter of Abraham' to be loosed from the far more cruel tie that had bound her crippled frame for eighteen years? St. Luke tells us that the result of this answer was to put all His adversaries to shame; and the crowd that attended Him rejoiced to see this triumph of His love and power. Perhaps He may on this occasion have uttered the parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven, which Luke records. These contained a strange prophecy of the gradual spreading of that kingdom which as yet was scarcely understood by one of His followers, and which was ere long to undergo seeming extinction by His cruel death —yet which has spread, and shall spread, until all men shall own Him Lord.

So He went on through the cities and villages teaching and journeying to Jerusalem. One day a listener asked Him, 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' Jesus was always wont to discourage these general inquiries, and to impress upon His hearers that personal duty, rather than idle curiosity, was their first concern. 'Strive to enter in by the straight gate,' was His reply; and figurative and solemn words followed, as to

the possibility of many who had seen Him in familiar daily life failing to obtain entrance into the kingdom of God.

One more controversy with the Pharisees was to take place respecting the vexed question of the Sabbath, which hitherto had filled so prominent a part in our Lord's conflict with the spirit of Judaic formalism.[1] Jesus was invited on the Sabbath day into the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, not from motives of hospitality or reverence, but that He might be watched and spied upon in a spirit of malice, to pick out occasion for blame. Among the uninvited guests who stood about the room was a man afflicted with the dropsy. In all probability he had heard that Jesus was in the house, and had forced himself into His presence in the hope of cure. The Pharisees, seeing him there, were wondering what Jesus would do, when He suddenly put to them a plain question:

'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?'

They were in a dilemma. Had they said 'No,' they would have had to brave the indignation of the bystanders and of all to whom the unfeeling answer would be reported; and with the wretched sufferer before their eyes they felt instinctively that such an utterance would be too sweeping and inhuman to find

[1] Six such controversies are recorded:—
The healing at Bethesda.—John v.
Scene in the cornfield.—Mark ii.
Healing of the withered hand.—Matt. xii.
The healing of the blind man at Siloam.—John ix.
The healing of the paralytic woman—Luke xiii.
The healing of the man with the dropsy.—Luke xiv.

acceptance. On the other hand, to say 'Yes' would have given a sanction to the doings of Jesus that they were unwilling to extend. So they were silent, obviously caught in their own toils. Jesus called the man, healed him, and let him go. Then, turning to the Pharisees, He used another of the numerous illustrations with which he combated their irrational and hypocritical Sabbatarianism. Which of them, He asked, if an ox or an ass fell into a water-pit on the Sabbath-day, would not draw him out? The inference was obvious: if these lesser deeds of mercy might be performed for an animal, might not the greater act of healing be wrought for a human being? Like His adversaries in the synagogue, they were dumbfounded, and could find no words to answer Him.

This feast was the occasion of other teaching on the part of Jesus. On the couches [1] at the table the middle place was the best, and the chief seat was that on the central couch. He noted the unmannerly desire among the guests of the Pharisee to take precedence the one of the other at the feast, and gave them a lesson, in pictorial language, on the duty of humility. If they were to be exalted, it should be by the act of others, not by their own selfish striving. The words with which He closed [2] show that He meant this, not only as a rule of social courtesy, but as a principle applicable to the whole of life, for only those who are truly humble shall be exalted by God.

The same train of thought led Him to rebuke the

[1] *Triclinia.* [2] Luke xiv. 11.

selfishness that characterized all the social life of the Pharisees. He told them that the motive for hospitality should not be the hope of a return, but the genuine desire to do good and give pleasure; hence the poor, the afflicted, should not be forgotten in entertaining richer friends. It was the Sabbath when Jesus uttered these words, and on those days it was usual for the rich members of the synagogue to receive persons from a distance between the services and give them meals. Now Jesus probably knew that in the house where He was sitting this custom was made a pretext for feasting friends of the host, and the poor, who needed the provision most, were disregarded. Hence came His injunction, which does not imply that it is wrong to entertain equals in rank, but that disinterested hospitality to those who need it most is not to be forgotten.

One of the guests, probably tired of these personal lessons, made a general remark that he thought would suit this stern, pure-minded Teacher: 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.' This, however, formed a text for one of the most memorable parables of Jesus, that of the Great Supper. He told them of a man who invited many guests to a feast, and at the appointed time sent out his servants to remind them, but all began to make excuses. One wished to see a recent addition to his estate; another had bought five yoke of oxen and wished to try them; a third was just married, and made it a pretext for refusing. The excuses, though different in each case, were all alike shallow and worthless, and the host, in his anger at

hearing them, bade his slaves go out into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor, maimed, halt, and blind. When that was done, and yet the tables were not full, he sent out again, to persuade the homeless vagrants to come in.

It is easy to see what the parable meant. The 'great supper' is the kingdom of Christ; the invited guests were the Jews, foremost among them the Pharisees, who refused to listen to His call. Then the publicans and outcasts of Israel were bidden, though they were considered morally impotent for good and blind in ignorance; and yet again the Gentiles outside 'the city' are prefigured by those in the highways and hedges, who were to be graciously urged into the feast.

Another parable which Jesus uttered at this time to His disciples is that of the Unjust Steward, in which He showed that, if the 'children of this world' apply care and anxious thought to the right management of their possessions, much more ought the children of God so to arrange their worldly affairs that they should 'lay up treasure in heaven.'[1] Some of the Pharisees who heard the concluding sentence. 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon were angry, because they loved money and yet felt sure they were serving God. Therefore they

[1] The difficult text 'Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it shall fail they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles,' is thus paraphrased by Dr. Green: 'Just as the steward sought to provide himself a home by conferring obligations on those merchants, so do you by wise action now make sure of bliss hereafter.'—*Notes on Gospel History*, ii. 300. Of course the dishonest plan of the steward is not meant to be commended in itself.

tried to laugh Him down. In His answer to them, which St. Luke gives in a compressed form, He tells them that though praised by men their hearts are known to God; and then He evidently blames them for their servile flattery towards Herod Antipas, the ruler of Peræa, whose sins they dared not censure, like the brave prophet he murdered, and at whose feet they bowed in cowardly adulation.

Again He speaks in parables, and tells them the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, in which He rebukes that worldly spirit which was ever a hindrance to His teaching. This parable may be taken as a commentary upon the moral of the Unjust Steward, for the selfish Dives, by neglecting to use things temporal aright, lost his hold on things eternal. The solemn lesson is taught that in the life to come the estimation in which people are held on earth will often be reversed; and, again, that if the Divine means of enlightenment on earth are not sufficient to touch the heart, the apparition of a visitor from the dead would have no lasting effect upon the stubborn will and conscience.

It was probably somewhere on this journey to Jerusalem that a certain lawyer or teacher of the law asked Jesus, not with an honest motive, but with the idea of entrapping Him, 'What shall I do to obtain eternal life?'

Jesus questioned him as to what was already written in the law he made his study, and the man in reply gave the noble summary of the Ten Commandments that was recognized at the time by the more thoughtful minds of the nation: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.'

'This do, and thou shalt live,' was the answer of Jesus. A soul really penetrated by love to God and man is in possession of life. But the lawyer wished to justify his question, and therefore asked, 'Who is my neighbor?'

In reply the Saviour uttered one of His most beautiful parables. He sketched the lonely traveller descending the steep rocky gorge from Jerusalem to Jericho, which falls 3,000 feet(nearly the height of Helvellyn) in twelve miles. From the caves in the overhanging mountains robbers rushed upon him, who stripped him, beat him, and left him helpless and bleeding in the fierce glare of the sun, reflected by the white limestone cliffs on that wild and lonely pass. Down the long descent comes a priest, who sees the sufferer lying by the rocky path far below him, but he does not pause to help when he reaches the spot—only travels on to the city of Jericho, whither he is bound to perform service that will have a hollow sound in the ear of Him who knows the deed of selfish neglect. Again, a Levite on his way between Jerusalem and Jericho casts a pitying glance on the wounded man, but leaves him without succor. At last, as the sufferer's heart is sinking within him, a member of the hated Samaritan race approaches, mounted on his ass or mule. Surely he will go his way; but no—he stops to tend the stranger, and takes him on his own beast to a caravanserai, such as still exists on the mountain-side about midway between

Jerusalem and Jericho, there to be cared for at his expense.

'Which of the three,' Jesus asked, 'was neighbor to the man who fell among thieves?'

The lawyer did not choose to reply, 'The Samaritan,' for he knew that neither Samaritan nor Gentile could wrest the title of neighbor from him, so he replied, 'He that showed mercy on him.'

'Go and do thou likewise,' were the significant words of Jesus, enjoining a wide charity in the interpretation of the Divine law of which this man—its authorized exponent—had never dreamed.

At some period of this slow progress through Peræa the Seventy returned to Jesus; not all at once, but two and two, as He had sent them out. Very few weeks could have elapsed since the beginning of their mission; yet, full of joy and surprise, they came forth to meet Him as He approached the cities and villages whither they had been. They were especially delighted to find that they were able, in the name of Jesus, to cast out 'demons.' Their Master sympathized with their exultation, telling them that His eye had beheld prophetically the triumph of good over evil, the 'lightning fall of Satan from heaven,' of which their power over unhallowed influences was a sign. They should yet further experience this success; but they were to rejoice less in its possession than in the knowledge that their names were written in heaven.

The triumphant faith and love of these disciples, fresh in the rapture and surprise of their first victories won for Jesus, apparently inspired Him with the words

of rejoicing that follow, in which He thanks the Father that, though the Divine mysteries have been hidden from the wise and prudent (the rulers of the land), they are revealed unto 'babes.' The adoration of the simple and lowly, and of the publicans and sinners, was dear to Him, though the learned and haughty Scribes and Pharisees rejected Him. For things were not changed in this journey through Peræa; as of old, the publicans and sinners thronged around Him, and the Pharisees murmured angrily because He not only received them, but actually allowed them to take meals in His company. Many were the truths he taught them. The parables of the Importunate Friend and of the Unjust Judge gave them a lesson on the duty of faith, and the sure answer to earnest entreaty. Then came the story of the haughty Pharisee in the Temple, who prided himself on his good deeds and boasted concerning them to God, while the poor Publican could only beat his breast afar off and cry, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' How full of new meaning to His hearers must have been the lesson that the Publican rather than the Pharisee was the accepted worshipper! Yet it was only the same truth He had so often striven to teach—that penitent humility is the first step to reformation, while proud self-sufficiency bars the entrance against new light.

Once again He taught them in three parables, having for their theme the recovery of the lost. In the region of Peræa,[1] with its ridge of hills bordering the Jordan

[1] 'The combined description of the pastures "in the wilderness"

and far-stretching pastures beyond, the sight often might have been seen of a shepherd leaving his flock in the 'wilderness,' or wide pasture-land, while he hurried up the ravines and along the crests of the hills to find the strayed sheep. As was His wont, Jesus took the scenes around Him to weave into His teaching, and by a beautiful analogy represented Himself as the Good Shepherd seeking out the lost member of His flock.

> But none of the ransomed ever knew
> How deep were the waters crossed,
> Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,
> Ere He found His sheep that was lost.

And little could His hearers understand all that was meant by that touching and beautiful symbol, which has inspired men to represent it, from the rude delineation scratched on the tombs in the Catacombs down to the art of the present day.

On the same theme was the parable of the Lost Drachma, sought so diligently by the woman who dropped it; and, lastly, the idea of the whole Gospel was set forth in that 'pearl of parables,' the tale of the Prodigal Son. In this immortal story no element of Divine tenderness is lacking. Untold multitudes have felt their hearts melt within them as they heard how the foolish lad demanded all his patrimony at once, and

and "on the mountains" can hardly find any position in Palestine precisely applicable, except the "mountainous country" or "wilderness," so often called by these names, on the east of the Jordan.'—Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 423.

PODS OF CAROB-TREE—'THE HUSKS THAT THE SWINE DID EAT.'

took it far from his home, there to waste it in dissipation—how, reduced to misery and want, his food 'the husks that the swine did eat,' he ventured to steal homeward to ask for a low place in his father's household—how his father, discerning him a long way off, rushed with joy to meet him, and lavished a tender, compassionate welcome upon his repentant son. The jealousy and anger of the elder brother were related for the sake of the Scribes and Pharisees who were listening; and the whole story ends in words of exquisite gentleness and beauty:

'It was meet that we should make merry and be glad; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'

Such are the wanderings of humanity; such is the tender love of the Father in heaven.

Thus Jesus pursued His way, attended everywhere by crowds who hung upon His teaching. At last some of the Pharisees asked Him 'when the kingdom of God cometh.' His answer is full of significance. The kingdom of God was not to be revealed by a sudden demonstration which should cause men to cry 'Lo here!' or 'Lo there!'—rather was it already in the midst of them—within them also, if they would admit it.[1] Little did His proud hearers know that in the following of this despised Galilean the germ was existing of the mighty force of Christianity.

To His disciples privately He continued the theme, bidding them not be deceived by false reports of His

[1] ἐντὸς ὑμῶν may mean either. See margin of R. V.

coming, and in other prophetic words He warned them of the vengeance that should, sooner or later, wait upon national corruption and wickedness. The destruction of Jerusalem was to prove a stern commentary in after years upon His words.

CHAPTER XXX.

AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION.

BEYOND the Mount of Olives, not an hour's walk towards the east from Jerusalem, a secluded hamlet was perched upon a rocky plateau overlooking a peaceful dell. Hidden from the great city by an intervening ridge of Olivet, it afforded a pleasant retreat for one who was visiting Jerusalem, and yet wished for some relief from the noise and bustle of its crowded streets. This hamlet was Bethany, and it contained a household very dear to Jesus. Doubtless He had often withdrawn to the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus on former occasions when he was in the neighborhood, although we do not hear of the sisters until late in the story of His life.

It was probably on the eve of the Feast of Dedication,[1] which fell some time in December, that Jesus entered this familiar home. Great was the joy of the two sisters

[1] This visit must have occurred at the end of the journey through Peræa, as Bethany was near Jerusalem.

and their brother at receiving so beloved and honored a guest. Martha set to work at once to prepare an elaborate meal for Him, weary and hungry as He doubtless was on His entrance. Flushed and excited, her mind was distracted with numerous housewifely cares as she bustled hither and thither; Mary, on the contrary, in the rapture of seeing again the beloved Teacher upon whose words she loved to dwell, sat at His feet, absorbed in listening to His voice. Had she been neglecting her usual task of domestic duty in the pleasure of hearing the teaching of Jesus, her conduct would have been simply selfish. She is sometimes praised as though the merely contemplative aspect of religion were superior to the practical, and this is not true. Too often has the incident been used as an excuse for spiritual selfishness, and the lazy Christian, absorbed in sentimental piety, has uttered to the self-denying, active worker, whose whole life is engrossed in the conscientious fulfilment of the task God has given, 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things.'

Not so ran the teaching of our Lord. Martha was doubtless the sister who usually undertook the household cares, and she was quite able to fulfil them single-handed. But on this occasion her housewifely pride was aroused; not altogether for the sake of Jesus, but also for her own credit, she was anxious to provide as grand an entertainment as possible on the short notice, and she could not understand why Mary was not also rushing hither and thither in bustling preparation. At last she could bear it no longer, and hurrying into the

adjoining room where Jesus was speaking, and Mary was listening in reverence at His feet, she exclaimed, 'Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.'

Jesus replied with a smile to the flushed, excited hostess, 'Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful: for Mary has chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her.'

Thus He gently rebuked that habit of mind which is so absorbed by a multiplicity of cares as to forget the one great aim of life. Martha clearly, by her conduct, had a tendency to do this; otherwise she would not have thought so lightly of the priceless opportunity now afforded of hearing the teaching of Jesus. The words used in the original to express her housewifely concern clearly show that it was quite out of proportion to the occasion. Had she better understood her Visitor, she certainly would not have made His coming the opportunity for a long and elaborate supper. Rather would she, while preparing amply and fitly for His needs, have shown her deep sense of the value of His teaching, and thus have pleased Him more than by presenting a long and varied array of dishes.

The Saviour did not mean to exalt the meditative over the active spirit, but merely to repress the tendency to excessive energy and worry of mind, which invariably leads to fretfulness and drags the soul down from pursuing its high ideal. As a rule, the most spiritually-minded Christians are those who are most busy in work for their Lord; and among His own immediate

followers we find a Paul, a John, while rising to ecstasy of contemplative devotion, exerting every nerve in zealous toil. The danger into which energetic natures may fall, not their ordinary habit, is reproved by the gentle words of Jesus.

From Bethany three pathways lead now, as probably they led then, to Jerusalem. Doubtless Jesus took the shortest way over the brow of the Mount of Olives when He visited the city at the Feast of Dedication. On entering Jerusalem He found a scene of gladness and rejoicing; for the Feast of Dedication, or Feast of Lights, was a national thanksgiving, instituted to celebrate the renewal of the Temple worship after the Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, had profaned the sacred precincts. It was celebrated nearly in the same manner as the Feast of Tabernacles, by the carrying of boughs bound with willow and much singing; it lasted eight days, but did not require attendance at Jerusalem. The presence of Jesus showed that He looked kindly upon these national rejoicings, in which the memory of the hero Judas Maccabæus and his fellow patriots was honored; and He walked in the winter sunlight along the colonnade[1] on the eastern side of the Temple, decked with shields and golden crowns in honor of the festival.

His outward form was now well known, and He had

[1] 'Solomon's porch,' John x. 23. Josephus says it was so called because it was built out of the materials of the ancient Temple. It is very improbable that the actual porch built by Solomon had been left standing.

not long appeared, before the Pharisees, who had evidently been agreeing that they would extract a full statement from Him, challenged Him suddenly to hold them no longer in suspense, but to tell them plainly if He were the Messiah. In using this expression they thought only of an eagerly expected political champion, more successful than the hero whose achievements they were celebrating, who should lead them on to throw off the foreign yoke, and to repel the Romans and their detested nominees from the country. Jesus would not answer directly in the affirmative, for well He knew the term 'Messiah' would convey no hint of His true mission to their minds. He spoke to them of the works He had done, which bore so radiant a witness to His character; then, as though knowing it was useless to try to make them understand, He told them that they were not sheep of His flock. Continuing the figurative description of Himself as the Good Shepherd, which two months before they had heard from His lips, He ended by solemnly saying, 'I and My Father are one.'

The hearers were infuriated. As on a recent occasion, they stooped in the first impulse of their rage to pick up the heavy stones lying in readiness for the unfinished Temple buildings; but Jesus calmly asked them for which of the good deeds He had shown them from His Father they were going to stone Him. For no good deed, they answered; but because He, a man, made Himself God.

Jesus, by reference to a passage of the Old Testament,[1] proved to them that even in their own law those

[1] Ps. lxxxii. 6.

who represented God had had the title of gods (*Elohim*) applied to them; why then should they say that He, who had shown He had more than human attributes, blasphemed because He claimed Divinity? Once more He appealed to His works as a proof that He was one with the Father. The Pharisees did not attempt to answer, but with blind hostility strove to seize Him. Their rage, however, was baffled. His calm majesty overawed their wrath, and passing through the midst of them He left Jerusalem.

This visit to the capital had been, not the aim of the great journey ushered in so solemnly, which the last chapter describes, but rather an episode in that journey. 'He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,' not for the Feast of Dedication, but for His Passion. The time for that had not yet come; His journeying in Peræa was not ended, and He had many precious sayings to leave as a legacy to the world before He sighed out His life upon the bitter Cross. Thus it was not in flight, but in the sober execution of His plan, that He went away again into Peræa, there to pursue the ministry that had been interrupted by the brief visit to Bethany and to Jerusalem. He chose the region where John had taught, and crowds resorted to Him, as they had come to His forerunner.

Again we have the record of an encounter with the Pharisees, who came to Him 'tempting Him' on the question of the marriage bond. John the Baptist had lost his life through his fearless utterances of the Divine law, and perhaps the Pharisees had hope of a similar fate for Jesus. Like His predecessor, but in loftier

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.

language, He upheld the eternal principles of morality, and even His disciples were astonished at the pure sternness of His words.

The scene that followed is one that throws much light on the character of the tender and beautiful Saviour. Some women in Peræa, feeling instinctively that their little ones would be welcome to the great Teacher, although He knew not the ties of domestic life, brought their young children, and even babes, that He might lay His hands on them and pray. The disciples were surprised and annoyed that a crowd of women and children should molest their Master, who was absorbed with what they deemed to be subjects of far more importance than the welcoming of such inferior beings.[1] They scolded the mothers, bidding them go away; but when Jesus saw it He was displeased at the harsh dismissal. How precious are His immortal words, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of God.' Children and parents have loved to dwell upon them ever since they were uttered; painters have tried to depict worthily the scene that followed, when Jesus took the children one by one into His embrace and blessed them, laying His hand upon each infant head in turn. Happy little ones, to feel the close enfolding of that Divine tenderness! Yet the love that welcomed them is warm and living still,

[1] The disciples were fond of interfering to save Jesus from importunity and interruption; but it was never in accordance with His wishes, as is evident from the result. See Matt. xv. 23; Luke xviii. 39, 40.

and wraps around in his mighty gentleness all who come to its sacred consolations; while, as the Master often taught, those who copy in spirit the ideal of childhood—humility and loving trust—are the fit members of His kingdom in earth and in heaven.

As Jesus passed from the scene of this exquisite idyll, He saw some one running towards Him in hot haste. This was a young man of large possessions in those fertile plains of the Jordan: he was a ruler of the synagogue, and enjoyed esteem for his position and upright life. But he seems to have felt that something was lacking; and, hearing of Jesus, he resolved without loss of time to ask Him what more he could do to win life eternal. With haste and impetuosity he came, and knelt before His feet. 'Good Master,' he exclaimed, 'what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?'

The reply of Jesus, 'Why callest thou Me good? There is none good save One, that is God,' questions the young man's meaning in applying to Him, whom the ruler supposed to be an eminent Teacher, the title 'good.' Then He enumerated the second table of Commandments.

'All these things have I observed from my childhood!' cries the applicant, knowing little of the interpretation which the Master before him had given to these very precepts. Jesus looked at him, and His heart was moved with affection for the candid, impetuous youth, so anxious to win the immortal crown, so little knowing what he asked. He put him to the test. The young man wished to do 'some good thing'; was

he willing to sell his possessions, distribute them to the poor, and follow Jesus? Doubtless His piercing eye saw that the love of money, so prevalent in the Jewish nation, was the flaw in the young man's character. And so it proved; for he became 'exceeding sorrowful,' and turned away.

The poet Dante, in his vision of the lower world, describes a crowd of shadows, rejected alike by heaven and hell, swiftly following a whirling banner. Among them is

> '—— the shade of him
> Who made through cowardice the great refusal.'

—an apt expression for such a choice!

Jesus sadly watched him as he went back towards his wealthy home, rejecting the ineffable blessedness of discipleship for the poor substitute of worldly riches; then He uttered the memorable comment on the difficulty with which rich men should enter the kingdom of God. The proverb He used has undergone many attempts at explanation,[1] but it was a metaphor of a class frequently employed among the Jews, and is not to be literally understood. It simply expressed the great difficulty that the unaided human spirit must find in detaching itself from an abundance of things temporal, and laying hold on things eternal.

[1] Some interpreters have altered *κάμηλον*, camel, to *κάμιλον* rope, to make the figure less startling; others have explained that the side opening of an arch through which a burdened camel could with difficulty pass was called a needle's eye. But similar proverbs (introducing an elephant and needle's eye) are common in the Talmud, and the explanations are questionable.

'Who then can be saved?' cried the amazed disciples. Jesus replied that, while with men it was impossible, all things were possible to God. Peter, surely with a touch of complacency, announced that *they* had complied with the conditions the young ruler could not accept; what, he asked, should be their reward? The cases were hardly parallel. Peter, at any rate, had no 'great possessions' to leave; his boat and fishing-tackle still remained on the shores of Gennesareth for his use when he needed them, and he had apparently not much besides. Jesus, scarcely noticing the hint of self-commendation, promised a glorious recompense to all who had given up aught for His sake; but He warned them that many who were first now should be last in the world to come. To impress the lesson upon them that *God is debtor unto no man*, He told them, in reply to Peter's inquiry about a reward, the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard, in which the men who are last hired receive the same payment, by the free-will of their master, as those who have worked all day. In the same way, service in the kingdom of heaven is not a matter of exact equivalent of reward, suited to the judgment of the workers themselves, for work performed; and Jesus meant clearly to show that the Gentiles, who came late into God's kingdom, should have no inferior lot to the Jews, who had long deemed themselves Jehovah's chosen servants.

BETHANY.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

FROM the hamlet of Bethany on its rock plateau a long descent leads to the valley of the Jordan. Beyond the gorge of the rushing river the Peræan hills form a distant rampart against the sky; and across that deep abyss, towards those purple heights, the eyes of Martha and Mary were one day strained in eager longing. It was about two months since the time when Jesus had last visited their home, and now there was a pressing reason why He should come at once. Lazarus had been suddenly taken ill, and the two sisters were afraid he would die. They had sent across the Jordan valley to the place where Jesus was staying, begging Him to come without delay. But, before the messenger had time to return, Lazarus died.

Bitter was the grief of the two poor sisters. Would that they had sent earlier for Jesus; but surely *now* He would come at once, bringing the comfort and help that ever dwelt in His gentle presence. They counted the hours that must elapse before He appeared; but the time came at which they could expect Him, and the

beloved form of their Friend was not seen ascending the long and weary way from the Jordan to their upland home.

Jesus had, in fact, received the message of His friend's illness, but instead of starting at once He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God,' and remained two days longer where He was. At the end of that time He said to His disciples, 'Let us go into Judæa again.' They were astonished, remembering how lately the Jews had attempted to stone Him, and tried to dissuade Him; but He repeated what He had said before in other words,[1] that until His work was done He could walk in safety. 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,' He continued, 'but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.'

They did not understand, though on a former occasion He had spoken of death as sleep.[2] Then He told them plainly that Lazarus was dead, and for their sakes He was glad He had not been there earlier, in order that their faith might be confirmed by what He wanted to do. 'Let us go unto him,' He continued. Thomas, always apt to take a despondent view of matters, at once concluded that Jesus would be seized and put to death by His enemies; nevertheless his love was strong. 'Let us also go,' said he to his fellow-disciples, 'that we may die with Him.'

So they started on their way, and when they had climbed the long and toilsome road to Bethany, they

[1] Luke xiii. 32, 33.

[2] Matt. ix. 24. Compare Acts vii. 60; 1 Cor. xv. 18; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.

found that Lazarus had lain in his rocky tomb four days. It was customary among the Jews for burial to follow immediately upon death.[1] The day of death and burial was that on which the message was received by Jesus; the two following days were spent by Him in waiting; on the evening of the fourth He arrived at Bethany. The mourning family were evidently held in repute in the neighborhood, for many Jews had come from Jerusalem to comfort Martha and Mary. No friend, however, was like the One who lingered so strangely. At last, someone brought the tidings 'He is coming; we can see Him with the disciples ascending from the valley.' And Martha eagerly hurried out to meet Him, leaving Mary sitting sadly in the house, unconscious of His approach.

'Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother would not have died!' are the words with which she greets Him; and even now her belief in His power, though vague, remains.

'Thy brother shall rise again,' He answers, referring, not to the resurrection at the last day, but to the miracle He would ere long perform. Yet purposely He does not make this clear, and she takes the general meaning only, which fails to comfort in the aching sense of recent loss. Then He speaks words that ever since their utterance have come with a burden of solemn hope to those who mourn their dead:

'I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and

1 Acts v. 6, 10.

whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die. Believest thou this?'

Martha could not comprehend the full meaning of this wonderful assurance, in which the thoughts of spiritual and physical death and life were intermingled; but she could trust her Lord. He did not ask for full understanding, simply for confidence, and this she gave Him freely. 'Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even He that cometh into the world.'

But she wished Mary to share the comfort of the Saviour's presence, and therefore went to summon her. This she did in a whisper, that the news of the arrival of Jesus should not be overheard and carried back to Jerusalem by the numerous Jews who were in the house. There was need for precaution, which Martha knew as well as the disciples; in this case, however, it was unavailing, for the friends, supposing Mary had gone to weep at the grave, followed her at once. When she had come to the Master outside the village, she fell at His feet, greeting Him with the self-same words that Martha had used, while the tears burst forth in passionate bitterness. The Jews who came with her, doubtless friends of Lazarus, wept in sympathy and sorrow, and when Jesus saw their grief His tender heart was moved with compassion, mingled with indignation at the far-reaching misery wrought by sin.

'Where have ye laid him?' He asked; and as He went with them they saw that He was weeping.[1] Who

[1] ἐδάκρυσεν, shed tears silently; not ἔκλαυσεν wept aloud (as Luke xix. 41). The word κλαίω, used of the weeping of Mary and

shall tell the depth of meaning in those tears of Jesus? He knew the infinite pathos of human life; and His Divine pity saw in the scene before Him only an emblem of the numberless times to come when breaking hearts should mourn their dead with no Saviour to work a miracle at the grave. True, His far-reaching eye could see the happy outcome of all in the world where parting is unknown; but His sympathy with humanity was too deep and tender to let the radiant future blind Him to the desolate present that is wrought for countless aching hearts by sin and death.

Some of the Jews interpreted His tears as a proof of affection for Lazarus. Others again, remembering His miracle at the Feast of Tabernacles, speculated whether He who could open the eyes of the blind could not also raise the dead.

Thus they came to the grave, which, like most of those belonging to the richer Jews, was a recess in the limestone rock, closed by a huge stone fitted into its entrance.[1] Jesus bade them roll away the stone, and though Martha, in natural horror and bewilderment, at first objected, His calm words reminded her of His promise. The block was therefore removed, and Jesus, lifting up His eyes to heaven, thanked God that He was about to grant His prayers.

'LAZARUS, COME FORTH!' The words fell in clear

her friends, means to wail; but the grief of Jesus contrasted with theirs.

[1] The limestone hills of Palestine afforded innumerable caves of this description.

and ringing distinctness on the ears of the shrinking bystanders; and yet another heard them, for from the dark cavern an awful figure stepped, shrouded in grave-clothes, with the head still bound in the cloth that had been tied around it at death.

'Loose him and let him go,' were the Saviour's next words; and Lazarus, well and strong, restored to life, was free to embrace his trembling rejoicing sisters and to go to his own house.

Words can scarcely describe the gladness of reunion that followed; yet the poet has given us a beautiful picture of the scene, and of Mary in the Saviour's presence.

From every house the neighbors met,
The streets were filled with joyful sound,
A solemn gladness even crowned
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest remaineth unrevealed;
He told it not; or something sealed
The lips of that Evangelist.

. . . . . .

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other though her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

The friends from Jerusalem, their work of attempted

consolation thus strangely ended, had nothing to do but to return home. Many of them believed on Jesus; but others, alarmed and fearing some evil magic, went and told His enemies at Jerusalem.

The Sanhedrin met in angry perplexity. What were they to do respecting the growing influence of this Galilean? Matters were reaching a climax; this reputed miracle had exceeded the healing of the blind which had baffled and enraged them a few months before. He would doubtless, they thought, take advantage of the popular excitement to make Himself a king, and in any case the national tumult that seemed likely to arise about Him would draw down the wrath of the Romans, and cause them to extinguish the remainder of Jewish independence.

Caiaphas, the high priest,[1] stopped their discussion by the plain suggestion that Jesus should be put to death. It would be better, he said, quoting a well-known proverb, for one man to die for the people than for the whole community to perish. St. John adds that these words were an unconscious prophecy. Uttered in the spirit of unjust time-serving cruelty, they nevertheless prefigured the truth that the death of Jesus should be for the sake of the whole world.

[1] The high priesthood was originally for life, but had of late become subject to frequent changes. The Romans were continually setting up and deposing their nominees. Joseph Caiaphas was civil high priest from A. D. 25 to A. D. 36, when he was deposed by Vitellius. A large part of the honor of the position was shared by Annas (John XVIII. 13), who was his father-in-law.

Little heeding the supreme meaning that lay hid in the sinister proposal, the Sanhedrin accepted it, and the fiat went forth that Jesus should die. How or when He should suffer they did not then decide; in fact, as they had lost the power of actually inflicting capital punishment, they knew they would have to seek the intervention of the Roman governor before He could be put to death. Therefore the ways and means of His arrest and accusation were postponed for future consideration; but none the less He was doomed.

The raising of Lazarus is recorded only by St. John. The other Evangelists confine their account to the Galilean ministry and the story of the Passion, yet they notice the *consequences* of the miracle, for without it the sudden decision of the rulers to compass the death of Jesus, and the enthusiastic procession from Bethany to Jerusalem, would remain unexplained. Their silence may be due to the scope of their work, also to the fact that when their three Gospels were written there would probably be danger in bringing into prominence a man living close to Jerusalem as the subject of Christ's power. St. John's Gospel was written long afterwards, and for Gentiles, both of which facts would destroy the second reason for silence about Lazarus.

Jesus heard the doom pronounced against Him, and knowing that the fitting time for His death had not yet come, He withdrew with His disciples to Ephraim,[1] a village on a hill that overlooked the high

[1] Probably the modern Taiyibeh, called Ophrah in the Old Testament (Josh. xviii. 23; 1 Sam. xiii. 17.)

pasture-land of Judæa, the 'wilderness,' as it is called. The Sanhedrin had issued an order that anyone who knew where He was should notify it; but for a little while He lingered with His disciples in safe retirement, preparing His soul for the conflict and anguish of the end.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THROUGH JERICHO TO JERUSALEM.

THE Passover was now drawing near; and not only caravans of Galileans but crowds of pilgrims from Greece and Egypt, Italy and Gaul, Spain and Syria were thronging towards Jerusalem. Jesus, from the hill where he was abiding, could see the valley of the Jordan black with moving companies. The time was approaching for His sacrifice; and descending from His retirement He started with the Twelve upon His solemn journey to the capital.

Many were the inquiries already rife about Him among the pilgrims who had reached Jerusalem for the purpose of purifying themselves before the feast.[1] His name and His deeds were on every tongue. The members of the priestly and ruling class felt more strongly than ever that they were on the brink of a strange tumult of some kind, for the air was full of flying rumors and half-expressed fealty to the wonderful Prophet, mingled with dark and sinister forebodings.

[1] Numb. ix. 10; 2 Chron. xxx. 17. See also Josephus, *Antiqq.* xvii. 9.

JERICHO

It was a time of excitement and unrest, and the Sanhedrin felt strengthened in the resolution to have Jesus put to death when they could seize Him. 'Will He come to the feast, or will He be deterred?' asked the pilgrims one of another. Meanwhile He was walking alone on the path that was to lead Him to death. Behind Him, at a distance, followed His disciples; not, as of wont, clustering round Him and forming a happy, reverent group while He talked to them of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven or discoursed in parables, but in wonder mingled with fear, shrinking from the sight of the sorrow of their Lord. Why should the shadow thus dwell upon His spirit? Had He not just achieved His greatest miracle. So they uttered their uneasy wonder and forebodings to each other; but they were not long to be kept in doubt. Turning and beckoning to them, He summoned them to His side, and told them again in plainer language the unwelcome story that they had heard but scarcely believed among the woods and streams of Cæsarea Philippi. Clearly He set forth to them that He, the Son of man, should be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, condemned to death, mocked, scourged, and crucified, and that on the third day He should rise again. But even now 'they understood not.' Their minds were full of the glorious miracle at Bethany. Surely its result was to be the elevation of Jesus to the Messianic throne! Hence they preferred to dwell upon the memory of that triumphant resurrection rather than to hear their Master's dread prophecy of shame and suffering. How fully they were at this time expecting the earthly king-

dom of Christ may be seen from the request that followed with strange incongruity shortly upon the solemn revelation of Jesus. Salome, the mother of James and John, approached Him with her sons, worshipping Him, and tendering the request that the two apostles might sit on either side of Him in His glory.

Little did they know that the path to that glory lay through suffering such as they could not picture to themselves. The reply of Jesus seems to breathe an infinite sadness. They could not understand Him even yet, and in the supreme moments of His journey towards His Passion they were occupied with selfish ambition. How gentle, notwithstanding, are His words: 'Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?'

'We are able,' they replied, with the self-confidence born of ignorance. Little did they dream of Gethsemane and the cross; but of the cup of victory, the baptism of consecration to some kingly office.

Jesus, in His answer, foreshadowed what should, in truth, be their fate; they were to share His cup and baptism, the one in martyrdom by the sword, the other in lonely exile on an island rock amid the blue waters of the Ægean; but the literal boon they asked was to fall only to the lot of those whom the Father should deem worthy.

Bewildered, James and John turned back to the ten disciples, who were angry at their request, and began to rebuke them for asking such distinction. But Jesus calmed the strife by the holy and beautiful words in

which He reproved all struggling for precedence, and said, 'For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.'

This whole incident cannot fail to remind us of the dispute on the way from Cæsarea Philippi and the subsequent teaching of Jesus. In both instances a revelation of the Saviour's glory was followed by a prophecy from Him of His sufferings; the disciples dwelt persistently on the meaning of the glory rather than the sad prediction; and He ended their subsequent strife for precedence by teaching the grace of humility.

They were now approaching Jericho, then a large and populous city standing in a fair oasis at the mouth of a deep glen in the desert-plain of the Jordan. The torrent that rushes down the glen, and other springs rising at the foot of the bare limestone hills, gave birth to lovely luxuriance of shrub and flower. Groves of palm-trees waved around, and gardens of roses, with plantations of balsam, procured for the city its name, 'Jericho,' or 'the perfumed.' When our Lord drew near the spot, probably on the evening of Thursday, Nisan 7, the country in its spring radiance must have seemed to smile a welcome to Him. A great crowd were attending Him, consisting, doubtless, in part of the pilgrims who were going up to Jerusalem as well as the followers who were always attracted by the presence and words of Jesus. Near the town a blind man—Bartimæus—sat begging with his companion.[1]

[1] The slight differences in the account of this miracle have exercised the ingenuity of commentators rather unprofitably. Matthew

He heard the tread of an approaching multitude, and hearing that Jesus of Nazareth was coming, he began to cry out vehemently, 'Jesus, Thou Son of David have mercy on me.' The multitude wished to silence him, but Jesus stopped and bade that the sufferer should be called. 'Be of good cheer rise; He calleth thee,' fell with hopeful sound on the blind man's ears; he sprang up eagerly, came to Jesus, and was healed. The poet Longfellow has seen a beautiful meaning in the incident:

> Ye that have eyes and cannot see,
> In darkness and in misery
> Recall those mighty Voices three.
> Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!
> Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, φωνεῖ σε,
> Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε.

Jericho was a busy city; from the palm-trees of various kinds that abounded in the neighborhood oil

and Mark say the miracle was performed as they went out from Jericho. Luke says 'as He drew nigh unto Jericho.' Matthew mentions two blind men; Mark and Luke only mention one. Many explanations have been offered; for instance, that the cry was raised by Bartimæus as Jesus entered Jericho, but that He deferred the answer till He left the town, when He healed Bartimæus and another. One commentator, Macknight, suggests that the miracle took place between the two Jerichos—the ancient city of the Canaanites and the new semi-Herodian city. It is surely best to acknowledge the impossibility of absolute certainty. In the case of the Gadarene demoniac (p. 199) there is the same difference of number; Matthew mentions two, Mark and Luke only one. In our account, however, of this miracle, it seems best to adopt the version of Luke, who gives the connection of events clearly and consecutively throughout the whole story of the entry, the blind man's joining the procession, the halt at the dwelling of Zacchæus, and the parable uttered afterwards.

was made, and the revenues of its balsam plantations were so great that Antony had bestowed them as an imperial gift upon Cleopatra, who afterwards sold them to Herod. Taxes were levied upon these productions, and tolls were also collected here from the pilgrims who crossed the Jordan; hence a large number of 'publicans' were found in the place, whose business it was to secure the revenues. The head of the tax and customs department was a Jew named Zacchæus, who, by means of extortion, had become rich. He heard the pilgrim band coming along through Jericho, and the crowd thronging the streets to watch it pass; doubtless also he had been told of the miracle wrought for Bartimæus, who had joined the procession; and, eager to see the Prophet of Nazareth, he tried to elbow his way to the front. But he found this impossible; he was too unpopular for people willingly to make a passage for him, and as he was too short to look over the heads of the crowd he climbed in his anxiety into an Egyptian fig-tree,[1] whose branches overhung the road. Jesus looked up and called him by his name, bidding him descend, and receive Him into his house. Great was the horror of the people at such a mark of attention, from One whom they hoped to make their king, to a man who represented all that was most hateful to the Jew; who symbolized the Roman mastership, and who had sold his birthright by taking the part of his country's foe. And Jericho was a city of priests, containing,

[1] Sycamore or fig-mulberry; not our sycamore, but a low branching fig-tree, very easily climbed.

tradition says, half as many as Jerusalem; hence the choice of Zacchæus would be all the more noticeable. But Jesus had not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. Zacchæus, touched in his inmost spirit by the love that had sought him out, and feeling the power of that pure Presence, made a public promise there and then of one half of his goods to the poor and fourfold restitution to any whom he had wronged. 'I have wrought,' the Saviour seems to say, 'all that your contempt and hatred against this man could not do. He also, like yourselves, is a son of Abraham, and not to be despised by you; sinful it is true he is; but I, the Son of man, have come to seek and to save that which was lost.'

Either in the house of Zacchæus, or when they had started again, Jesus told the parable of the Pounds to the disciples and pilgrims thronging around Him. He described the nobleman who, like both Archelaus and Herod Antipas, had gone into a 'far country' to receive a kingdom, leaving money with each of his ten servants to be employed till he returned. The citizens hated him, and sent a deputation after him to protest against his appointment;[1] nevertheless his kingdom was given him, and he came back to examine the results of his servants' trading and to punish his enemies. Those

[1] When Archelaus travelled to Rome to receive the title to his Jewish dominions from the hands of Augustus, fifty persons were sent by the disaffected Jews to procure his rejection, and they were joined by eight thousand Roman Jews. The splendid palace that Archelaus had once occupied stood in Jericho, which would lend emphasis to the form of the narrative.

who had done well were rewarded in proportion to their faithfulness; the man who had laid up his pound [1] in a napkin, and who returned it with angry and insolent words, was deprived of his share, which was given to the most deserving of the other servants; while the rebellious citizens who had sent the embassy were put to death.

This parable had many meanings; yet perhaps the chief is that suggested by its introduction; He spake a parable because He was nigh unto Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear.

The unfaithful servant was the type of the Jew who had wrapped the truth he possessed in the tight enfolding of legal ceremonies, excusing himself for not letting it develop by the pretence that he feared an austere and exacting Lord. By his standard Jesus would not submit to be judged; rather should the talent that he had misused be taken away altogether and given to others. The story also shadowed forth the near departure of Jesus from the world, and the certainty that He would exact an account on His second coming; rewarding His faithful servants and finally triumphing over evil.

Once more He walked alone, leaving at a little distance behind Him the eager, wondering crowd, full of the miracle they had witnessed, the parable they had heard, and the events that should transpire at Jerusalem. They entered the barren rocky gorge that leads

[1] The pound was the sixtieth part of a talent of silver, equal to rather more than 3*l.* sterling.

upward to Jerusalem for fifteen miles, the scene of the recent parable of the Good Samaritan; and thus they journeyed onwards, the Master going first, absorbed in thoughts that His dearest disciples could not share. After His long lonely climb He once more entered Bethany, accompanied by His disciples, on the afternoon of Friday,[1] the 8th of Nisan (March 31, A.D. 30), six days before the Passover, and before the sunset had marked the beginning of the last Sabbath He should spend on earth.

[1] John xii. 1. From the afternoon of Friday to the afternoon of Thursday following is exactly six days.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

AS was His wont, Jesus preferred to make His home with the friends at Bethany, instead of at Jerusalem itself, and He was received with love and rapture in the household whose mourning He had so lately turned into joy. During the Sabbath that followed, the tidings went abroad that He was at Bethany, and many of the Jews flocked thither, to see Him with Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. On the Saturday evening they 'made Him a supper.'[1] It was customary for the meal after the Sabbath, which ended at sunset on Saturday, to be more generous than usual, and on this occasion there was a special

[1] The account in the Fourth Gospel of the order of events is definite and decided, while the mention of the 'supper' in Matt. xxvi. 2—16 and Mark xiv. 1—11, though apparently later, has in reality no chronological data, but is only 'while Jesus was in Bethany.' We may therefore unhesitatingly accept St. John's account and consider that the Synoptists do not contradict it. Matthew and Mark do not mention Mary by name. They wrote while the family at Bethany still lived, and from John xii. 10, it is evident that all notoriety about the household was best avoided.

reason for celebrating the coming of the Divine guest. The feast, we are told by Matthew and Mark, was in the home of 'Simon the leper,' who was certainly not a leper still, or he would not have been occupying his house and entertaining friends. Perhaps he owned the largest guest-chamber in Bethany; or he may have been a relative of the trio beloved by Jesus, for Martha evidently took a familiar position in his house. When the Gospels were written much was known as to these details, which made the account intelligible to those who first read them, but which we have lost in the lapse of time.

The feast was spread; Lazarus, with the glow and gratitude of his new life still fresh within him, was reclining at the table near the Saviour who had called him back from death; the disciples were sharing the hospitality; many unbidden guests thronged the room, gazing with eager eyes and whispered comments on Jesus and on Lazarus, while Martha, thoroughly in her element, occupied herself energetically with active ministrations to do Him honor. Mary sat and looked with eyes brimming over with love and unutterable gratitude at her Lord. What could she do to show her devotion to Him? She rose, fetched an alabaster vase of Indian spikenard[1] that had doubtless been long among the treasures of the family; and breaking the vessel, she anointed first His head and then His feet[2]

[1] A liquid gum of exquisite fragrance, imported from Arabia, India, and the Far East, of great value. The poet Horace speaks of a small flask as equal in worth to a cask of wine.

[2] It was customary to anoint the heads of distinguished guests,

with the contents. With the long tresses of her hair she wiped his feet, and the exquisite fragrance stole through all the house. That delicious subtle perfume from the broken alabaster was the finest emblem of self-sacrificing love, but it awoke within one heart the vexation of baffled avarice. 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?' said Judas Iscariot. The very thought that in a moment so much money (equal to about 10*l.*) had been, as he thought, wasted was intolerable. Doubtless his idea, though he dared not utter it quite openly, was this: if the woman wished to make such a present to Jesus, why not do it in hard cash, which would come into the bag that he kept for the common good, and which he could use to practical advantage? He masked his exasperation under cover of care for the poor, and perhaps, as men have been known to do at the present day, he really made himself believe that his avarice had a good motive. He was utterly incapable of appreciating the lavish beautiful devotion that thought nothing too good or costly to express adoration to the Master. What was to him irritating wastefulness was, however, to Jesus the prized expression of unselfish, abounding love. 'Let her alone!' He said, defending her from a hint of reproach; and in immortal words He praised her act, which, He said, should be told wherever the Gospel was preached throughout the world.

but to anoint the feet was an act of honor scarcely shown even to kings. The reclining posture at meals made it easy for anyone outside the couches to reach the feet of a guest. See p. 179.

'She hath anointed my body aforehand for the burying!' The meaning of the act, then, was a consecration before the death He unflinchingly predicted. The words must have struck a cold chill to the hearts of many present; to one they came with intolerable disappointment. Long had Judas of Kerioth, narrow of soul, selfish of aim, dreamt dreams of the earthly Messianic kingdom and the post that he should occupy as treasurer of its riches. As time went on he had seen the vision gradually fading. He was a man of Judæa, with the typical faults of the Jew of that day: avarice, bigotry, hardness. The unworldly kingdom of heaven as preached by Jesus was a thing incomprehensible to him; yet the miracles he witnessed kept up his hopes of something more tangible and profitable to come. Doubtless he had often had thoughts of deserting the apostolic band, as he heard the mystical words of Jesus respecting His humiliation; but of late the miracle at Bethany, the enthusiasm that rallied round the Master, His triumphant procession through Jericho, had revived his expectations. But these words, 'for the burying,' were as a death-blow to his hopes. Plainly no wealth and honor were to be obtained from a Master who was on His way to death. Then the terrible thought of revenge and treachery assailed him.

It is hard to unravel the motives that led on to the act of betrayal, nor is it a profitable task; but it seems that avarice alone could not explain the conduct of Judas, as he stole that night from Bethany and entered

the council-room in the house of Caiaphas.[1] Anger at his baffled hopes—the thought that Jesus was a deceiver after all—and again the argument that if He were not, He could escape His enemies by supernatural means, all had a part in the dark medley of the traitor's design. He bargained with the priests whom he found assembled to betray Jesus into their hands when a fit opportunity should occur; this was the loophole for which they had been wishing, and the interview ended in their agreeing to pay Judas thirty pieces of silver (not quite 4*l.*) a wretched sum for which to barter his Master's life and his own! No specific time was fixed upon for the betrayal, but it was agreed that it should take place as quietly as possible, lest a tumult should arise among the people.

On the next day (commemorated by Palm Sunday) the report spread quickly that Jesus was about to visit Jerusalem. His appearance at the feast was looked for with intense and ever-growing interest, especially among the crowds of Galilean pilgrims, and his entry was, by common consent, to be made the signal for an outburst of enthusiasm. Shortly after noon Jesus and the Twelve left Bethany on foot, and He sent two of the disciples in advance to Bethphage,[2] a hamlet near Bethany, with particular directions to bring to Him a colt that they should find tied

[1] The hill where the palace of Caiaphas is said to have stood, overlooking the valley of Hinnom, is still called the Hill of Evil Counsel.

[2] Bethphage means a House of Figs. Bethany probably means the House of Date Palms, or, as some say, House of Misery.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY. *(From a panel by George Tinworth.)*

up in a certain place, which had never yet been ridden.[1] For the owner, who was doubtless a disciple, the assurance that 'the Lord had need of him' would be sufficient: and so it proved. The two messengers brought the animal, flinging their bright-colored outer garments upon him to do Jesus honor; then they lifted Him upon the colt and started on their way. Crowds were following Him from Bethany, and a vast stream of people were pouring out from Jerusalem to meet Him, cutting palm-branches as they came from the gardens outside the city, and ascending the Mount of Olives with joyful shouts of welcome. When the two streams met midway on the journey, the crowd who had come from Jerusalem turned and preceded Jesus,[2] flinging in His path the palm-branches they had already cut, while others tore down boughs from the fig-olive and walnut-trees beside the track and threw them before Him. Others—and these were the greater number—snatched their loose cloaks from their shoulders and laid them in His way. Thus, as St. Matthew notes, the predictions of the prophets were fulfilled.[3]

So the joyous procession climbed slowly towards Jerusalem, not yet seen for the intervening hill-crest. The road that was taken winds over the southern

[1] The exactness of the description in Mark's Gospel seems to imply that Peter (from whom Mark derived his information) was one of the two sent, and preserved a mental picture of the scene.

[2] Mark xi. 9. 'They that went before and they that followed;' *οἱ προάγοντες καὶ οἱ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἔκραζον.*

[3] Zech. ix. 9; Zeph. iii. 14, 15. The ass in Palestine is a larger and nobler animal than in England. It was emblematic of peace, while the horse was the type of war.

shoulder of Olivet.[1] On the left hand of the track the ground falls steeply away; on the right the hill slopes upwards, with fig-trees growing here and there among the rocks. Gradually the vast mass of people began to cross the ridge whence the first sight is obtained of Jerusalem. The slope of Olivet hid the Temple and the northern part of the city, but its south-eastern corner, where the castle built by Herod stood on the supposed site of the palace of David, came into view, and at the spectacle the whole multitude, hoping that the kingdom of olden days was now to be restored, broke into glad, exulting cries, 'Hosanna[2] to the Son of David! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord!'

An onlooker would have thought that it was a proud and glorious thing to command such enthusiasm and homage, but the heart of Jesus was deeply sad. He knew full well that He was not the Messiah whom they figured to themselves; yet He *was* the true Messiah, and as such He saw fit to allow the transports of the people, ignorant and transient though they were, and to enter Jerusalem as their King.

Even among that excited throng there were some

[1] Of the three paths from Bethany to Jerusalem, one is a steep footpath over the top of Olivet; one a long circuit over the north spur of the hill; the third, which alone meets the requirements of the narrative, was the one always used by horsemen, over the south shoulder, and was without doubt the road taken by Christ. See Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine.*

[2] 'Hosanna!'—i. e. 'Save now!'—implies both an acknowledgment of royalty and a cry for help. It is found in Ps. cxviii. 25; 2 Sam. xiv. 4; 2 Kings vi. 26.

CHRIST ENTERING JERUSALEM.

who did not sympathize with the gladness. A few Pharisees, who were beyond measure exasperated at the tumult of rejoicing, appealed to Him to stop the shouting; but, pointing to the stones that strewed the mountain track, He replied, in striking metaphor, 'I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.'

As the procession advanced Jerusalem was hidden awhile by the intervening hill; then the path wound upwards again, and the city burst suddenly upon the view. From this point Jerusalem is seen rising high above the deep leafy valleys of the Kedron and of Hinnom. The marble buildings of the Temple with their gilded roofs flashed white and glorious in the clear spring sunshine, surrounded by the splendors of architecture that made the Jewish capital, in the words of an ancient historian, one of the wonders of the world.[1] It was a sight that stirred the hearts of pilgrims when they neared their beloved city. But a deeper emotion filled the soul of Jesus, and as He thought of all that was to come—how that fair scene should be ravaged and desolate ere long—His tears rushed forth. The pathos of the whole scene touched Him unspeakably. This ardent multitude knew him so little that in a few brief days many of them would shout 'Crucify Him!' with as much energy as they now cried 'Hosanna!' 'The contrast between the ideal and the actual—the men and the city as they seemed and as they were—

[1] Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 8.

was more than His heart could bear,'[1] and He wept, saying, 'If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes!'

When He entered the city great was the commotion throughout the narrow streets and crowded houses. 'Who is this?' was the question in everyone's mouth, as the throng pressed forward to Mount Moriah; and the accompanying multitude answered, 'This is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.' The Pharisees, when they saw the tumult and excitement, said to one another, 'Behold how ye prevail nothing; lo, the world is gone after Him.'

The sunset hour was now approaching, and the crowd dispersed, probably because they would need to purify themselves before they entered the Temple. Jesus, however, went into His Father's house, and after looking round upon all that was being done there, He returned to Bethany with the Twelve.

[1] Dr. Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MONDAY IN PASSION WEEK.

WE know not whether Jesus made His home during the last week of his life at the house of Lazarus, or whether like other pilgrims He with His disciples bivouacked in the neighborhood of Bethany. It seems that this must have been His lot on the night of 'Palm Sunday,' for on the next morning, as He and the Twelve were passing early towards Jerusalem, He was hungry. Martha surely would not have let Him leave her roof without partaking of ample provision for His needs.[1] As they walked towards the city they saw in the distance a fig-tree standing by the roadside,[2] conspicuous among others

[1] Monday and Thursday were kept as voluntary fasts by the stricter Jews, and to this the Pharisee refers when he says in the parable, 'I fast twice in the week.' But Jesus was not likely to observe a custom so different from His whole method of life. It has been suggested that the hour of prayer had not yet arrived, before which the Jews did not take a meal.

[2] Fig-trees were planted by the roadside because the dust was thought to be good for them, and anyone might eat the fruit. Before the siege of Jerusalem not only fig-trees but palms and walnut-trees abounded in the neighborhood.

AN ORIENTAL FIG-TREE.

of its kind by reason of its abundant leaves. As the fruit of the fig-tree is formed before the leaves open, Jesus might well have expected to find some to stay His hunger when He reached the tree, for though, as Mark observes, it was not the ordinary season of figs,[1] neither was it the ordinary season of leaves, and the two usually appeared together. But the fair-seeming show was all in vain; the tree was to all appearance strong and vigorous, yet it lacked the chief reason of a fig-tree's existence; it had no fruit. Seeing in this tree with its deception beneath the outward promise a type of the 'hypocrite' He so frequently and sternly rebuked, Jesus, in the hearing of his disciples, said to it, 'No man eat fruit from thee henceforward forever.'

It is scarcely necessary to say that this was not done in irritation at the failure of a senseless tree to give fruit. The withered trunk was to be a type that should point to others as well as our Lord's disciples His abhorrence of profession supported by no 'fruit' of good and holy action. Surely He knew how much His Church in days to come would be troubled by this false show of goodness. Not only, therefore, was it for the sake of the hypocritical, ostentatious Scribes and Pharisees that the deed was wrought, but for ourselves in these last times—that we too may shun the appearance of religion without its deeds.

[1] There is a kind of white fig in Palestine that ripens in spring, before the black fig, which Dr. Thompson, in *The Land and the Book*, says he has eaten in April or May. On the plain of Gennesareth the figs, according to Josephus, hung ripe every month in the year, excepting January and February.

They passed on into the Temple, and here in the outer court a scene was taking place that Jesus had not failed to mark in His brief visit on the preceding evening. It was all as it had been three years before, when He by the might of His pure indignation had driven forth the sellers and the money-changers. Again the sheep and oxen were penned on the tesselated pavement in the Court of the Gentiles, the dealers were vying with each other to extol their cattle, and the money-changers were sitting at their tables to change the coin of all countries for the silver half-shekel required for the Temple treasury. Noise, chaffering, greed, cheating filled the place that should have been consecrated to the welcome of men of all races into their Father's House. Jesus was moved with anger, and with His fearless mein, His eye that flashed stern rebuke, He proclaimed, looking round on the court:

'Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers.'

Once again the intruders quailed before the might of His authority, and the dove-sellers, cattle-drovers, and money-changers withdrew from the precincts they had defiled. Thus at the beginning and at the end of His ministry Jesus cleansed the Temple—a solemn emblem of His work in the Church and in the heart. Doubtless on this second occasion the deed was rendered easier by the recollection of the former purification; also by the fact that He was no longer an unknown Galilean but a well-known Teacher, who, only the day before, had been escorted with trium-

phant honors into Jerusalem. Thus no scourge was needed for the expulsion of the traders, and the court was quickly cleared. When this was done Jesus began to teach and to heal in the Temple. Crowds of sufferers came to Him; listeners hung enraptured upon His lips; the very children hailed Him with shouts of 'Hosanna!'

This was all grievous beyond description to the chief priests and the scribes. The repetition of the cleansing of the Temple, of which they heard, though they were not present, exasperated them; all the more because they secretly connived at the holding of the cattle-fair, and yet knew they were in the wrong. Then as they stood by and watched the teaching of Jesus, and last of all heard the joyful 'Hosanna!' from young lips ringing through the Temple courts, their wrath boiled over. 'Hearest Thou what these are saying?' they angrily asked Him. 'Yes,' Jesus calmly answered; 'did you never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?'[1]

They longed to make away with Him, but dared not lift a finger, so great was the enthusiasm that He aroused among the people, and they were nervously afraid of the indiscriminate vengeance that the Romans might wreak for any tumult in the city. They could but bide their time, knowing that among His own disciples they had a confidential friend.

Among the visitors to Jerusalem were certain Greeks, who, doubtless struck by the act of Jesus in

[1] Ps. viii. 2.

the cleansing of the court which was peculiarly theirs, and His large-hearted reference to 'all nations' as sharers in the right of prayer in the Jewish Temple, applied to Philip for a personal interview with Him. Whence they came we know not; but they wished to carry back to their home a clearer knowledge of this wonderful Teacher, whom they probably had never seen before. Philip consulted Andrew, his fellow-disciple from Bethsaida, and together they told Jesus that these strangers wished to see Him. Their request was doubtless granted, but it seems to have roused within His breast a clearer sense that His hour was come—of suffering leading to glorification. In veiled and wondrous words He spoke of the triumphant victory over death that should be the portion of His followers; then, as the vision of His Passion, so close at hand, passed before Him, He uttered words of sudden sharp appreciation of its anguish, conquered in the prayer, 'Father, glorify Thy name.'

A voice from heaven, heard by the multitude as thunder, articulate only to the few, came to Him for the third time in His life, saying:

'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.'

The transient pang was over, and Jesus now spoke of His conquest over evil, ending by the beautiful prophecy, as yet so little understood:

'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself.'

His hearers, among whom the Greeks probably still lingered, were bewildered and incredulous. Jesus, drawing His imagery from the sun sinking towards the west

—for evening was near—bade them walk in the light while it was still day, that darkness should not overtake them.

'Become sons of light.' They could not understand all He meant, yet they knew enough to win them to His side. But the Sanhedrin was against Him, and rather than face its condemnation many of the people dallied with their conviction of the truth. Even that day had been fraught with acts that had provoked the wrath of His enemies afresh, and when His teaching was over He withdrew from the Temple, passing the evening hours among the trees of Olivet.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE LAST DAY OF PUBLIC MINISTRY.

ON the following morning, as Jesus and His disciples once more took their way to the city, they passed a shrivelled and useless tree by the wayside, which Peter recognized and eagerly pointed out as the fig-tree that had been condemned on the previous day. Jesus made this an occasion for a lesson on the power of faith, and told His little band that if they had trust in God they too should perform miracles transcending all their experience. Believing prayer, rightly used, should certainly find an answer, only it must not be employed as a weapon of vengeance against enemies; the forgiving heart alone can wield the power given by faith. These words were doubtless spoken to guard against the possible inference Peter might draw from the miracle that had been performed. He might reason that, as an unconscious tree had been cursed, living and sentient beings might be denounced too; and it is evident from his inquiry in the past about the 'limits of forgiveness' that he, impulsive and ardent as he was, would be sorely tempted to rush into wrath against the

enemies of his Lord in later times. But the beautiful influence of Jesus was constantly exercised over His headstrong disciple, to show that he might win the unbelieving by a better way.

They entered the Temple, and here, as usual, He began to teach. Among the crowds of people who had already assembled an august deputation made their way towards Him. The chief priests, elders, and scribes, representatives of the might and authority of the Sanhedrin, were coming to attempt to discredit Him before the populace with their question, 'By what authority doest Thou these things, and who gave Thee this authority?' Only two days before Jesus had ridden into Jerusalem in the midst of a triumphant procession; yesterday He had dared to show open disapproval of the priests' conduct by clearing the Temple from the traders whom they had tacitly allowed to fill its court; now He should give an account to them in public of these daring acts, and by somehow bringing Himself into contact with the religious law of the Jews or the secular law of Rome, should give them a handle whereby to proceed against Him.

He replied by another question, that answered their own: Was the baptism of John from heaven or of men? They were confounded; for they knew well that John had publicly borne witness to Jesus as greater than himself. They had themselves sent a deputation to him to inquire about his claims; therefore they ought to be able to answer. Yet they could not do so, for, while they *would* not sanction the authority of John, and consequently his testimony to Jesus, they dared not

deny it. The public enthusiasm had been, and still was, so great in the martyr-prophet's favor,[1] that their depreciation of him would have raised a tumult at once. They whispered together in baffled wrath, and when Jesus insisted on having an answer, they could but mutter ignominiously, 'We cannot tell.' He knew that this meant, 'We will not tell,' and His answer was calm and dignified: 'Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.'

This was to be the greatest day in the teaching of Jesus, even as it was His last of public ministry. He followed up His rebuff of the deputation by three parables, all conveying the same illustration of obstinate disobedience to the spirit of righteousness shown by these professed leaders of the people, The first story, to which He drew their especial attention, told of two sons, alike bidden to work in their father's vineyard. The first, while he smoothly promised obedience, did not go; the second flatly refused, but afterwards repented and went. Which was the more pleasing to the father —the hypocritical lip-service, followed by disobedience, or the refusal, with the repentance and obedience that ensued? His hearers had no difficulty in replying; and the parable must have exasperated the proud representatives of the Law, for its meaning, plain enough, was still further set forth by Jesus. They, the bigoted, rigid sticklers by tradition, obedient to God in profession, far from Him in heart and life, were exemplified by the former of these sons, while the latter typified

[1] Josephus, *Antiq.* XVIII. v. § 2.

the 'publicans and sinners,' who, at first, openly disobedient to the heavenly law, had nevertheless repented at the teaching of Jesus.

The second parable was more stern and solemn in its import, for it described the history of the Jewish people, darkening down toward the terrible crime they were now shortly to commit. In strange and weighty words He spoke: of a vineyard left to the charge of husbandmen by its absent lord; of servants, sent to receive the due share of the produce, ill-treated and killed by the husbandmen; finally, of a well-beloved son, sent by the father in the hope that he at least would win reverence and obedience, but shamefully murdered by the wicked crew. Well did this story of the vineyard typify the Jewish nation, entrusted by God, no longer the theocratic King in the olden sense, to rulers and priests (the 'husbandmen') that it might be trained in His way. Prophets He sent, to seek the fruit of good and faithful lives among His people; but their terrible fate was familiar to every Jew among His hearers.[1] Lastly, He had sent His Son.

The remainder of the interpretation was yet to come, the history of the next few days would supply it; but the men who had already plotted to destroy Jesus must have thrilled with rage as they heard the close of the parable. Still greater must their wrath have grown when Jesus, asking what the end should be of those

[1] See 1 Kings xviii. 4, xxii. 27; 2 Chron. xxiv. 21, xxxvi. 16; Neh. ix. 26; Acts vii. 52; 1 Thess. ii. 15; Heb. xi. 36. Isaiah and Jeremiah were both martyred, and many other prophets were slain whose histories are now forgotten.

husbandmen, received the answer from the people that they should be destroyed and the vineyard entrusted to others. 'God forbid!' the dignitaries ejaculated in pious horror; but Jesus continued the same lesson in applying to Himself the words of Psalm cxviii., as the stone which the builders rejected, but which nevertheless became the head of the corner.[1] Then in plain language He told them the 'kingdom of God' should be taken away from them.

The indignation of the Scribes and Pharisees knew no bounds; for they were not devoid of shrewdness, and perfectly comprehended this reference to them, as signifying their bigoted narrow spirit in conflict with the sweetness and light of His own teaching. But they dared not as yet exasperate the people by laying hands upon Him, and angrily withdrew into the background to concoct fresh schemes of vengeance.

Again Jesus spoke to the attentive concourse in the Temple courts, and His theme was the Marriage of the King's Son. This parable in many details is like that of the Great Supper, uttered during His last journey in Perœa; but the lesson seems enforced with added sternness and solemnity. The invitation is no longer the request of a private person, but the summons of a king. The messengers are not met with civil excuses, but with neglect, scorn, ill-treatment, and murder; the punishment by the king is (and here the parable becomes

[1] Compare Isa. xxviii. 16; Acts iv. 11; Eph. ii. 20; 1 Peter ii. 6, 7. The 'head of the corner' is the foundation-stone, binding two walls together at the angle of a building.

prophecy) the destruction of the murderers' city; while a fresh element is introduced into the parable by the guest who came without the 'wedding garment,' and was expelled from the bright company into the 'outer darkness.'

So, as the end of our Lord's life draws near, His teaching deepens in solemnity. We seem to see the responsibility of hearing Him, the guilt of rejection, stand out more plainly against the lurid background of a coming doom—that doom which made Him weep over the city and long to save it if He could.

His enemies, as He uttered the parable of the Marriage Supper, had been consulting over a new device. The Pharisees and the partisans of Herod, generally at variance, combined against Him whom they deemed a common enemy. The Pharisees chose some of their younger disciples, who accompanied the Herodians, and, pretending that a dispute had arisen between the two parties, asked Jesus, with much introductory profession of belief in His goodness and uprightness, whether it were lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar or not?

The design is obvious. If He answers 'Yes,' His sanction of the hated foreign yoke will dissipate the regard of the people for Him, and also set at rest the fears of His enemies that He will make Himself a 'king' in opposition to the Romans. If He answers 'No,' the solution of the question will be equally easy; for then He can be handed over to the Roman procurator as a dangerous rebel by these very Herodians who so conveniently side with the Pharisees.

Not so was He to be entrapped. With piercing eye

He saw through the repulsive pretence of reverence and belief with which He was approached. 'Hypocrites! why tempt ye Me?' were His first words. He bade them bring Him the tribute-money, and pointing out that the denarius bore the image and superscription of the Roman emperor, He showed them that acceptance of the coinage of the sovereign implied also acceptance of his authority. By acknowledging this denarius as a current coin they had tacitly acknowl-

A DENARIUS, OR ROMAN PENNY.

edged Cæsar as their king, and the question was not open for Him to settle.

'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's,' were His words, in which He brought to their remembrance man's chief end—strangely forgotten and ignored by them. It was not His business forcibly to alter the civil relations of society, but it *was* His chosen task to show men the duty they owed to their Creator, the stamp of whose image they bore.

The next who attempted to baffle Him were the Sadducees, who had as yet scarcely come into collision with the Prophet of Nazareth, caring little about His supposed pretensions as a would-be king, nor about His

opposition to the Pharisaic party. They now put to Him a question, striving to bring the doctrine of a future life into ridicule; but here also the victory remained with Him, as He showed them the spiritual nature of the relations in the world to come. With regard to the question of a future life, He pointed out that it lay involved in the Jewish law, which they themselves acknowledged, for the ancient saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,' did not mean that Jehovah was the God of mouldering dust, but of living souls.

The gentleness with which Jesus disproves the unhappy doctrine of the Sadducees is noticeable in contrast with His indignation against Pharisaic formalism and hypocrisy. Perhaps His words, 'For all live unto Him,' may have recalled some wistful unbeliever into the bright faith which alone can make life bearable for those who have lost their beloved.

These repeated triumphs in argument pleased and delighted the multitude; even some of the Scribes were glad that Jesus had put the Sadducees to silence. One of their number asked Him, as a test question, 'Master, which is the great commandment in the law?'

Jesus answered by declaring the great duty of love to God and love to man, which He had already approved as a summary of the Law and the Prophets.[1] The Scribe recognized the truth of His reply, and exclaimed that this 'love' was worth more than all the observances of Jewish ritual; a truth which the best

[1] Luke x. 27. 28.

and wisest of the nation had already begun to apprehend. His brave recognition of Jesus, coupled with his insight of the spirituality of the law, won words of decided approval from the Master: 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' Surely this man was, in after days, found among the followers of the crucified Lord.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DISCOURSE ON THE LAST THINGS.

NEVER again did the enemies of Jesus seek to waylay Him by 'entangling Him in His talk.' He had proved Himself superior to all such attempts, and it was now His turn to question the Pharisees. 'What think ye of Christ? whose son is He?' 'David's son,' they answered; but, by a reference to David's own words in Psalm cx., He showed them that the Messiah, David's *Lord* must be something greater. This they could not or would not explain; so once again they were proved 'blind leaders of the blind.' And now the force of His anger broke loose upon them. With perfect plainness of speech He bade the people, while they respected the lawful authority of the Scribes and Pharisees, refrain from copying their oppression, ostentation and pride; and then, turning to the rulers themselves, He denounced woe after woe upon their guilty heads. Never had He spoken with such scathing severity. Their hair-splitting legalism, their disregard of mercy, faith and judgment, while they exalted petty matters into infinite import-

ance, their life of whitewashed respectability and inward wickedness, were all summed up in the oft-repeated exclamation, 'Woe unto you, *hypocrites*,' with which He ushered in each fresh condemnation. And at the close of this terrible outburst of pure and holy anger came words of infinite pity and longing, in which we catch the echo of the parables He had uttered not long before:

'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate! For I say unto you, ye shall not see Me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.'

Yet not in anger, not in utter sadness, was Jesus to leave His Father's house on earth forever. As He lingered for awhile in the Court of the Women after His denunciation of Pharisaism and lament over Jerusalem, He saw a poor widow approaching one of the thirteen trumpet-shaped boxes that in this court received contributions. While the multitude poured in their gifts, and the rich ostentatiously offered gold and silver, she dropped in the smallest amount that was lawful, equal to less than a farthing of English money.[1] Others might have scorned the humble gift; not so the Master,

[1] Two mites equalled one fourth of an as, of which latter ten equalled a denarius; a denarius equalled 8*d.*, so that two mites were one-fortieth of 8*d.*—a fifth of an English penny.

He saw what even that minute offering meant to her, and calling His disciples He commended the spirit which led her to spare something out of her deep penury. Self-denial for the cause of God, no matter how small its visible result, thus received forever the stamp of His approval.

And now He left the precincts of the Temple, never to return. All who had heard His denunciation of the hierarchy, even in their own stronghold, must have known that the rupture was complete, and that He would not again teach in those courts. As He was departing with His disciples one of them called His attention to the magnificent building rising in terraced splendor up to the marble whiteness and gilded sheen of the Holy of Holies, now glittering in the light of the declining sun. Sadly and sternly He answered: 'There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.'

The little band crossed the valley of the Kedron, ascended the steep footpath that leads over the summit of Olivet, and then paused for a while. The hill sloped beneath their feet to the garden of Gethsemane and the brook Kedron; from the steep height beyond the ravine rose the city wall, crowned with majestic buildings and the Temple, most glorious of all. We know how often that view had saddened the heart of Jesus. It seemed now to inspire His disciples with anxious and questioning thoughts, for Peter, John, James, and Andrew asked Him, referring to His recent prediction:

'When shall these things be? and what shall be the

signs of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?'

Jesus answered them in the solemn discourse 'concerning the last things' that fills the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew.[1] First He warned them against false Messiahs and false prophets who should strive to lead men astray. Then He uttered predictions and warnings respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, which should be followed by the diffusion of the Gospel among the Gentiles and the gradual establishment of His kingdom on earth. Lastly, He spoke of the signs and wonders that should attend His final coming to judgment.

When? was the burden of their inquiry; but He answered, 'Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, but the Father.' The lessons for the disciples to learn were those of faithful endurance, watchfulness, and prayer. Upon the rest, as Luke clearly shows in his account, it was not for them to speculate.[2]

'Watch!' was the solemn refrain of this great dis-

[1] See also Mark xiii.; Luke xxi.

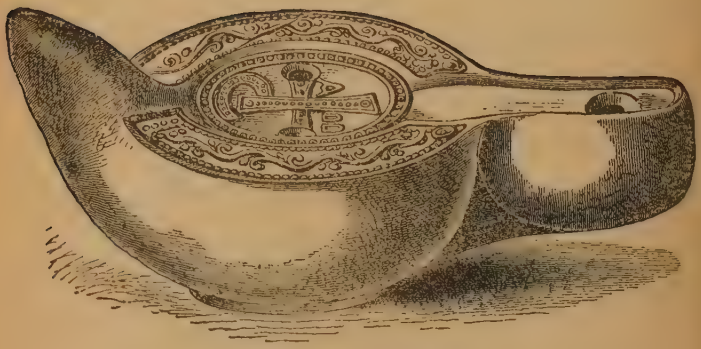
[2] The predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the second coming of Christ seem at times, in this great eschatological discourse, to be intermingled. But, if carefully studied, it will appear that the attention of the disciples was directed to two boundaries of time—the end of the present generation and the end of the race of mankind. Before the first, Jerusalem was to be destroyed and the establishment of Christianity was to be secured; before the last, the Gospel should be preached to all nations, and the signs (literal or figurative) of the last judgment should appear. Jesus expressly warns His disciples (Matt. xxiv. 6; Mark xiii. 7; Luke xxi. 9) against immediately expecting the end.

course. And to impress still further on the minds of His hearers the danger of sloth and carelessness, He told them the parables of the Ten Virgins and the Talents. In the first, the duty of careful preparation is shown by the fate of the five foolish virgins who, by slothfulness and want of due provision, were shut out from meeting the marriage procession and entering the house of the bridegroom for the wedding festivity; in the second, which closely resembles the parable of the Pounds[1] told on a former occasion, the need is shown of diligent activity in the employment of the different advantages entrusted to each man by his Maker. The parable of the Ten Virgins may be taken to symbolize the preparation of the inner life; the parable of the Talents expresses the importance of active Christian work. Thus the two together describe the inward and outward aspects of true Christianity—'faith' and 'works.'

From these parables Jesus rises to a solemn prophecy of the Last Judgment. In this vision the nations of the earth are gathered before Him and separated into two great classes; the former, who have proved their love to Him by deeds, are accepted; the others, though claiming outward connection with Him, are rejected, for the lack of service shows their lack of love.

But yet He would not conclude His discourse with

[1] The parable of the Pounds was uttered on the way from Jericho, or in the house of Zacchæus. In it, the money entrusted to the servants is alike in amount differently employed; in the parable of the Talents the sums vary. The rebels and their punishment are also not introduced into the second parable.



EASTERN LAMPS.

the majestic picture of Himself enthroned in judgment over the world, lest the hopes of the disciples should be lifted too high, and they should dream once more of an earthly kingdom. So He said to them, 'Ye know that after two days the Passover cometh, and the Son of man is delivered up to be crucified.'

With this note of mystery and sadness ringing in their ears they walked over the top of Olivet and down into the leafy hollow, above which the houses of Bethany clustered on their rocky platform. Unutterable thoughts must have filled the mind of our Saviour as He trod the moonlit hillside. He was soon to enter into His mysterious agony; and but one day of seclusion and prayer yet remained before His betrayal into the hands of His enemies.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE LAST SUPPER.

WHILE Jesus was absorbed in high discourse on the Mount of Olives with His disciples, a very different scene was being enacted within or near the Temple, upon which His serene gaze was directed from His mountain seat. The events of the day had roused the fury of His enemies to an uncontrollable pitch. Within the sacred precincts they considered peculiarly their own He had pronounced before the thronging multitude woe after woe upon the ostensible teachers of the people. All in high places alike—Pharisees, Herodians, Priests and Scribes—were dreading some outburst of popular feeling from the thousands out of all parts of the earth who were gathered in Jerusalem, which might shatter their religion, hurl them from the high places of sanctity into the contempt of the mob, and bring down upon them the merciless and indiscriminating vengeance of Rome. Hence they all combined against Jesus as a common enemy, and met to consult together what should be done.

The chief priests, who at this time belonged to the party of the Sadducees, had taken little heed of Jesus during His ministry. They did not care about the moral and spiritual teaching that so irritated Pharisee and Scribe. The maintenance of the system of Temple worship, by and for which the priestly order existed, was, on the contrary, of vital importance to them. Any bold innovator who assailed *that* was not to be reasoned with; he must be put to death. And they clearly saw that Jesus of Nazareth, by His teaching and conduct in the Temple, was a foe to their authority.

He must be put to death! That had been the decision of their former meeting, and was emphatically reasserted now. While they were debating, a visitor who had come to them four days before crept again into their presence. Judas of Kerioth had slunk away from the disciples and applied to the members of the Temple guard, who introduced him immediately before the council. Once more he proposed to deliver up Jesus into their hands, and the result of the negotiations was that they resolved the blow should fall at once, without waiting for the expiration of the feast. For by the help now offered Jesus might be found *alone*, away from the multitude who would take His part. A public arrest, in the explosive state of the popular mind, would be impossible; a secret arrest, after which Jesus could be shown already humiliated and forsaken, would probably shame many out of their belief in Him.

So the apostate betrayed the cause he thought was a losing one, which he had learned already to hate with a passion of intensity that is only possible when bitter

disappointment has come to selfish hopes. The Evangelists do not dwell on his motives; Luke says, 'Satan entered into him,' and John seems as though he could never speak of him without a shudder of loathing.

We know nothing of what passed upon the next day (Wednesday). The people came to the Temple, but they waited for His voice in vain. In quietness and solitude out upon the uplands near Bethany, or in some lonelier spot, His soul was communing with God in preparation for the coming struggle, and the Evangelists draw a veil of sacred silence around the scene. Yet a Christian poet has beautifully touched upon the quiet interval from Tuesday evening till Thursday evening in Passion week:

> On thee and thine, thy warfare and thine end,
> E'en in His hour of agony He thought,
> When, ere the final pang His soul should rend,
> The ransomed spirits one by one were brought
> To His mind's eye—*two silent nights and days*
> In calmness for His far-seen hour He stays.[1]

It was Thursday, on the evening of which the Paschal-supper was to be eaten,[2] and the disciples came to Jesus with inquiries respecting the preparations for it. His directions were simple. They were to enter Jerusalem,

[1] *Christian Year*, Monday before Easter.

[2] The question whether our Lord's last Supper with the disciples was or was not a Passover has engaged the attention of the most learned of commentators with varying results. The Paschal supper fell on the evening of the 14th Nisan, and the point to be decided is whether this 14th Nisan was Thursday or Friday in Passion week—

JUDAS PROPOSES TO DELIVER UP JESUS.

and would there meet a man bearing a pitcher of water for use in the evening; him they were to follow, and in the house whither he went the owner would show them at their request an upper room furnished.

in other words, whether the Passover feast was before or after the crucifixion of Jesus.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke state that the day of the Passover, the first day of unleavened bread, had come, on which the Passover must be sacrificed, and proceed to describe the preparations for keeping the feast. The owner of the guest-chamber is told that Jesus wishes to eat the Passover at his house, and the description of the Last Supper follows. 'They made ready the Passover.' and Jesus said to them, 'With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.' He also said beforehand (Matt. xxvi. 2), 'Ye know that after two days is the Feast of the Passover, and the Son of Man is (not crucified, but) *betrayed* to be crucified.'

No language, it seems, could be plainer. But St. John appears to say that the Jews ate the Passover on the following day, the Friday on which Jesus was crucified. See John xiii. 1, 'before the Feast of the Passover,' and the statement that Judas went out on Thursday night (verse 29) to 'buy those things that we have need of *against the feast*'; (xviii. 28) 'they (the Jews who brought Jesus to Pilate) entered not into the palace that they might not be defiled, 'but that they might eat the Passover'; (xix. 14) 'it (i. e. Friday) was the preparation of the Passover.'

Do the three Synoptists, therefore, contradict St. John? The simplest way of solving the difficulty is to interpret the allusion of the latter in harmony with the former, which can be easily done. Let us take the quotations from the Fourth Gospel one by one. The first (xiii. 1) simply refers to the love Jesus bore His own, which was unchecked by the events to come, and the note of time by no means involves the inference that the supper of verse 2 was not the Passover. The two following (xiii. 29, xviii, 28) are explained by the interpretation of 'Passover' as the whole feast, which lasted for eight days; the *chagigah*, or peace-offering, being the meal referred to, which was eaten on the day after the actual Paschal meal. The last allusion (xix. 14) is taken to mean that Friday—which was always called the Preparation (παρασκευή) be-

All was ready: the lamb, put aside for their use on the preceding Sunday, had been slain, and after sunset the little company gathered for that last sacred meal on which Christian imagination loves to dwell. It was far different from the scene that has been made familiar by the immortal picture of Leonardo da Vinci. Couches, each generally holding three persons, were placed with low tables before them on three sides of a square, the fourth side being left open for attendance. Upon these couches the guests reclined on their left arm, and at the right hand of Jesus lay John, the 'beloved disciple,' whose head could thus rest upon the bosom of his Master.

cause it was the day before the Sabbath—is in this passage simply called the Preparation, i. e. the Friday of the Passover week.

If this explanation be not accepted, what is the alternative? We must, in the first place, regard Matthew, Mark, and John as strangely obscure; secondly, we must believe that the supper eaten by Jesus was an anticipation of the Paschal meal—a Passover eaten a day too soon, without remark or astonishment excited in the disciples or the owner of the house, that Jesus might by His crucifixion typify the true Paschal Lamb. This is out of harmony alike with the Jewish customs, which were of the utmost rigidity in observing times and seasons, and with the whole spirit of His teaching. There is nothing beforehand which in any way seems to lead up to or render probable such an unusual course as the irregular celebration of the Passover.

So far as the calculation of dates can be relied upon, it is in favor of the above conclusion, for in A. D. 30, the year to which we assign our Lord's crucifixion, the 14th Nisan fell upon *Thursday*, as is stated in the elaborate tables of Wieseler. It is impossible here to do more than outline the controversy. See, for the above view, Robinson, Wieseler, Hengstenberg, Birks, Maclellan, Conder, Edersheim; for a different conclusion, Neander, Stier, Ellicott Westcott, Farrar, and most ancient commentators.

'With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,' He said; but the meal was not far advanced when He rose to perform an office that was usually the work of servants. After the dusty walk from Bethany the feet should have been bathed, when the sandals had been removed; but no one volunteered to perform this kindly service for the rest, and indeed the harmony of the scene had been interrupted by one of the childish disputes about precedence which Jesus had rebuked on former occasions. How often He had impressed upon them the lesson of humility and self-forgetfulness for the sake of others! but once again He was to translate it into the tenderness and beauty of action. Pouring water into the copper basin placed in readiness, He went through the customary task of a servant in every detail. His disciples seem to have suffered it in shame-stricken silence until He came to Peter, who met Him with impulsive and downright objection. In His reply the Saviour symbolized His purifying work on the heart, and in answer to Peter's eager outcry, 'Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head,' He implied that, as the man who is bathed needs but to cleanse his feet from time to time from the impurities gathered on the dusty road, he whose heart is freed once for all from the habitual dominion of evil, needs but to be purified from the daily pollutions of life. 'Ye are clean, but not all,' He added with a sigh; for He had just washed a traitor's feet.

Seating Himself again, the Master drew a lesson of humility from the act He, as Lord and Master, had

performed for them, and bade them follow His example.[1]

But the shadow of betrayal was upon His gentle spirit. The lot of His ancestor David, in the perfidy of a friend, was in a far deeper sense to be His; and, looking with grief around the familiar circle, He said, 'Verily, one of you shall betray Me.'

'Lord, is it I?' they cried one after another in incredulous horror; and even Judas, in more formal words, 'Rabbi, is it I?' asked the lying question. Jesus was silent; so Peter beckoned to John to ask who it was. The disciple 'whom Jesus loved' leant his head on his Master's breast and whispered:

'Lord, who is it?'

In an equally low voice Jesus answered John, who alone tells us that He gave the sign whereby the traitor might be detected. Into the *charoseth* that always formed part of the Paschal meal,[2] a thick sauce made

[1] Not literally, of course, but spiritually. The Pope, and Roman Catholic sovereigns, have carried it out literally by washing the feet of twelve poor old men on Maunday Thursday. Such ceremonies are, as has been well said, like 'little flags floating above the surface of the water, and showing where a richly-freighted ship hath sunk.'

[2] The order of the Paschal supper was briefly as follows. When the party was assembled, the head of the table pronounced a thanksgiving, and the first cup of wine, mixed with water, was passed round. Hands were then washed, and it was probably at this point that Jesus washed the disciples' feet. Bitter herbs were eaten, such as lettuce and endive, dipped in the sauce. Next came the cakes of unleavened bread, the roasted lamb, and the sauce of fruits and vinegar called *charoseth*, while a second cup of wine was mingled. Then came the 'dipping of the sop' by our Lord, and the exit of Judas. The third cup of wine was called the 'cup of blessing' (Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. x. 16, xi. 25), because it was accompanied by a thanksgiving for the meal, and while the fourth cup was passed

of dates, raisins, almonds, etc., mixed with vinegar, Jesus dipped a piece of the thin unleavened Passover cake which was placed by each guest and passed it to Judas.

'That thou doest do quickly,' said He then; but none of the disciples understood the meaning of the words, thinking rather that the Master despatched Judas, as purveyor for the little company, to make some necessary purchases for the season. He went out straightway, '*and it was night*'; darkness, within and without, haunted that treacherous figure vanishing into the gloom.

But while Judas and the priests were plotting against the Saviour 'He and His little band celebrated in celestial calm the supper that was to be for all lands and for all time the memory and mirror of that sacred night.'[1] Jesus, breaking bread with thanksgiving, distributed it to His disciples as a token of His body, broken for them; pouring out the wine, He bade them drink it as an emblem of His blood, soon to be shed for them. Down through the centuries has the precious command been observed, 'This do in remembrance of Me;' and 'until He come' His followers will cherish

round the hymn of Matt. xxvi. 30 (Ps. cxv.–cxviii.) was sung. It is very probable that many of the rites were omitted, such as the explanation of the meaning of the Passover, which anciently took place after the mingling of the second cup of wine. The third cup of wine was evidently that used in the institution of the Eucharist. Compare Exod. xii. 3-11, and for a fuller description see the article in Smith's *Biblical Dictionary*.

[1] Dr Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 242.

the memorial with its significant type of the nourishment He imparts to the soul that 'feeds upon Him by faith with thanksgiving.'

In spite of the sorrow weighing upon His heart He, with sublime unselfishness, thinks of the disciples He is so soon to leave. Tenderly He speaks of them as sheep soon to be scattered abroad, and utters special words of care for Peter, whose eager, impulsive, ardent nature has greater possibilities both for good and for evil than those of the other disciples. 'I am ready to go with Thee both to prison and to death!' he exclaims to his Lord; but he is met with the calm, sad assurance that before the repeated cock-crowing shall herald the dawn, he shall thrice deny the Master for whom he offers to lay down his life.

Jesus goes on to warn the apostles of the altered conditions under which His death will place them. Not as in their former journey are they to travel forth without purse or provision, relying on hospitality—nay, even self-defence might become a necessity.

'Lord, behold here are two swords!' they exclaim, taking His words literally, as they so often do. 'It is enough,' replies the Saviour, turning from the subject; and His tender spirit now devotes itself to the work of consolation.

Never on mortal ears fell words of such exquisite gentleness, radiant hope, beautiful sympathy, as those that are recorded for us by the 'beloved disciple.' Jesus first comforts the troubled hearts by the thought of the many mansions in His Father's house, bestows on them the benediction of His peace, and promises that the

Comforter shall come to teach them concerning Him.

'Arise, let us go hence.' These words seemed to mark a break in the discourse as they rose and sang together part of the Great Hallel. But before they left the house there was much that Jesus had yet to tell them. He warned them, under the similitude of the vine and the branches, of the necessity of abiding in Him if they would bear much fruit.[1] The fact of His indwelling presence and love He impressed on them in plainest terms, telling them that it was even better for His bodily presence to be withdrawn, that His Spirit might be ever with them, to enlighten and to guide into all truth.

They would have asked Him concerning His prediction of leaving them for a little while, and yet being seen again in a little while; but they had already broken the thread of His discourse more than once by misplaced, misapprehending questions, and they shrank from doing so any more. But He kindly came to their help, and spoke of the joy that should succeed their brief hour of trouble, when they should behold Him again, and retain abiding gladness from the sight. And the Father from whom He came, and to whom He was soon to return, should grant their petitions in His name.

'We believe that Thou camest forth from God!' they cried unanimously, in adoring, grateful reverence. Yet He knew the hour was approaching when, in spite of

[1] It is possible that the allegory was suggested by the colossal golden vine with clusters of grapes that adorned one of the gates of the Temple, visible now in the moonlight from the window at which He stood; or by a vine twining outside the lattice window.

their belief, they should flee in selfish fear. He would not dwell upon this coming lapse of their fealty to Him; but lifting up His eyes to heaven He uttered the solemn, wonderful prayer for His own, in which He asks that not only His disciples then present, but all who should, through the ages, believed on Him, may be kept from evil, sanctified, and made one in Him.

Thus absorbed to the last in Divine tenderness for the men who had trusted Him, mastering His mysterious anguish in unselfish sympathy for them, He ended all His sayings, and together they went forth into the moonlight and the cool night air.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

GETHSEMANE.

JESUS and the disciples left the city by the gate that looked towards Olivet, crossed the brook Kedron, and approached the olive grove of Gethsemane,[1] on the slope of the hill, where He was to enter into the darkness of untold suffering.

It is not for us to try to penetrate the veil of mystery that hangs over the sacred sorrow of our Lord. We can but look on in hushed and reverent silence, recognizing that His knowledge of the depths of human anguish has revealed Him to mankind more fully than triumph and happiness ever could have done. In that dark hour the burden of human guilt was weighing on His heart. He alone, of all who trod the earth, knew

[1] Gethsemane means 'oil-press,' and the name was doubtless connected with the manufacturing of oil from the innumerable olive trees in the neighborhood. Its site is traditionally fixed near the junction of two paths on Olivet; eight gnarled and very aged olive trees mark the spot, and a wall has been built around them. Whether this be the place or not, there is not much room for doubt respecting the general situation of Gethsemane.

the real meaning of sin. He hated it unspeakably, yet during all His earthly life it had been around Him, pressing against Him, resisting His efforts to put it away; and now the dark tide of human wickedness was to gather in full force, overwhelming, for the time, His pure spirit. Surely it was in part this agonizing sense of *what sin was*—the misery it dealt, and was to deal, to mankind—that wrought His agony.

GETHSEMANE.

And death was before Him, in its worst form of anguish and humiliation. Not in terror for Himself was He shrinking from the cross; but a death so achieved, by the hands of those He came to save, had in it what seemed at the moment a dread irony. And surely at that moment too He realized what physical pain and dying meant for mankind. He entered into the horror and misery that these must inevitably bring to untold millions; and as He did so His gentle heart

was wrung unspeakably by a burden of vicarious suffering too great to bear. He withdrew from His disciples, taking with Him only Peter, James, and John; and then, as if He could not endure even their sympathy, He said to them:

'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch.'

Out of the moonlight that checkered the ground with bands of light and shade He withdrew under the shadow of the trees, where He fell on His face and prayed, entreating that if it were possible the cup should pass away from Him. The shadow of that hour had been deepening upon Him for many months, and now His humanity sank appalled from the trial; yet in His uttermost anguish His words were, 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.'

Peter, James, and John were tired with sorrow, and as they watched Him they dropped asleep. 'What could ye not watch with Me one hour?' were His words of gentle reproof; and He bade them guard against the weakness of the flesh, which was fain to overcome the willing spirit. Again He went away and wrestled in prayer, and through their half-waking, half-sleeping vigil they saw Him sometimes kneeling, sometimes prostrate on His face, with sweat 'as it were great drops of blood'[1] falling on the ground as He wrestled with His unknown, unutterable grief.

[1] A profuse sweat marked by blood exuding from the pores of the skin has been shown by Dr. Stroud, in his *Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, 2nd ed. pp. 85–88, to have repeatedly been the result of intense mental agony.

But the victory was His. In that hour of sacred conflict and anguish, that season of great darkness, He won the help He needed to enable Him to die for man. The struggle was over when He came for the third time to His disciples. No more did He need their watchful sympathy; but even as He spoke to them the glimmer of torches and trampling of feet signified the approach of His enemies. Into the garden pressed a motley crew of armed servants of the Sanhedrin, together with part of the Roman garrison from the Tower of Antonia, headed by the traitor Judas.

'Comrade,' said Jesus, 'do that for which thou art come;' and even as He spoke the traitor uttered the hypocritical salutation, 'Rabbi, Rabbi,[1] hail!' and kissed his Master, in accordance with the preconcerted sign.

'Judas, dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?' were the heart-searching words of Jesus; and already the pangs of remorse were beginning to make themselves felt, for the traitor slunk away while the crowd pressed forward. Jesus asked them plainly whom they sought, and in reply to their answer, 'Jesus of Nazareth,' He with calm dignity said:

'I am He.'

His undaunted mien, His look of quiet majesty, mingled with the recollection of His teaching in the Temple, made the servants of the Sanhedrin start

[1] The usual word for the disciples to use to Jesus was Κύριε, Lord, but Judas seems always to have employed the colder term of 'Rabbi.' See Matthew xxvi. 25.

backwards, and in the crush some of them fell to the ground. They were reluctant, even then, to seize Him; but He again said, 'I am He,' and bade them let the apostles go their way.

Peter would not thus tamely see his Master captured, and, drawing his sword, he severed the ear of Malchus, the high priest's servant. Jesus instantly stopped the unequal conflict, and told the impetuous disciple that His surrender was voluntary, for, if He chose, angelic aid would rescue Him. St. Luke tells us that He healed the wound by a touch, and then He asked some of the chief priests and leading officers of the Levitical guard who had come out with the band why they had not arrested Him while He sat daily teaching in the Temple, instead of seizing Him in this violent and treacherous manner, as if He were a robber. They did not choose to answer, 'Because the multitudes, under the spell of Your voice, would have rescued You,' but led Him away captive; while all His disciples, seeing no hope of a miraculous deliverance, bewildered and dismayed, forsook Him and fled.

An unknown youth, conjectured to be Mark himself, who relates the incident, hovered on the edge of the crowd, eager to know what was going on. The Temple servitors caught hold of the loose linen garment which he had flung around him as he rose from sleep, and, leaving it in sudden terror in their hands, he fled away. Thus, deserted by all, with His hands bound behind Him, the Saviour was led onward through the night to the palace of the high priest in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND PONTIUS PILATE.

BETRAYED into the hands of His enemies, deserted by His friends, the bound Captive was led by the Roman guard back into the city, and up to the palace of Annas,[1] father-in-law of the high priest. This crafty and subtle old man, who is called by Josephus most fortunate of men because he had five sons in the high-priesthood, apparently retained much of the authority in his own hands as head of the

[1] Annas, or Hanan, was appointed high priest by Quirinus, A. D. 7, and deposed A. D. 14. The Talmud speaks of his family as the 'serpent brood,' and the character they bore was that of boldness, cunning, and avarice. One of the saddest features of the time was the utter degradation of the office of high priest from the ancient ideal, for the choice was now mainly dictated by political motives. Not the men who righteously feared the God of Israel, but Sadducees, men who feared and propitiated the tyrant power in the land, were elevated to the dignity, which they held, not for life, as in olden days, but at the pleasure of their rulers. The Pharisees, in spite of their enmity to Jesus, would scarcely have sought to compass His death; the Sadducean priests had no hesitation about it, but, as soon as He seemed to threaten the established order of things by which they lived, they decided that He must perish. Josephus notices that the Sadducees were much severer as judges than the Pharisees.

reigning house; and we may conjecture that the two men, Annas and Caiaphas, occupied different parts of the same official residence, opening into one spacious courtyard. To Annas, then, Jesus was first led at this untimely hour of midnight, for His enemies were all up and eager to work at His undoing, although His disciples found it so hard to watch with Him for one hour of silent sympathy.

The ex-high priest questioned Jesus about His disciples and His teaching, hoping to gain information that would prove useful at the coming trial; but He answered that He had always spoken openly to the world, in synagogues, and in the Temple, where all the Jews came together. He had formed no secret society, had no occult doctrine, and appealed to those who had heard Him.

One of the officers of the sentinel guard, thinking this was not a sufficiently servile manner to address the ex-pontiff, dealt a blow at the Prisoner, who rejoined with the gentle and pertinent words:

'If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?'

Annas saw that he should gain nothing by further questioning, and as a few members of the Sanhedrin had by this time been hastily collected in the house of Caiaphas, he sent Jesus across the courtyard to them. The ground on which they were resolved to attack Him was that of blasphemy, and they had in readiness suborned witnesses of His words, who were prepared to give false evidence against Him. All, however, that these witnesses could say was conflicting and contra-

dictory, and, in spite of evil ingenuity, could not be pieced together to form a rational accusation against Jesus. At last there came two who seemed to have a more definite charge to bring, for they had heard Him say something about destroying the Temple[1] and building it again in three days. Before an audience of priests, whose existence depended on the Temple, this was a serious accusation indeed, and it was with an air of horror and wrath that Caiaphas demanded, 'Answerest Thou *nothing?* what is it which these witness against Thee?' But Jesus, knowing that His judges were but seeking to weave a tissue of falsehood for their own ends, kept silence.

Nothing could be extorted from His serene dignity, which was beginning to overawe the council, so Caiaphas resolved to change the ground of attack and appeal to the consciousness of His mission which Jesus would not fail to express if He were questioned. Accordingly he cried:

'I adjure Thee by the living God to tell us whether Thou art the Christ, the son of God.'

And Jesus replied:

'I AM; and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.'

This open confession was what the high priest wished to hear; and yet surely the words must have brought a dread whisper of coming wrath to his mind. What if they were *true*? But he did not allow the thought to

[1] Jesus had not said *He* would destroy the Temple. See John ii. 19.

linger, and rending his linen robes with the cry of 'Blasphemy!'[1] he demanded that the conclave should pronounce Him worthy of death. From all lips came a voice of assent, and the council broke up, entrusting Jesus to the brutal care of the soldiery.

Meanwhile Peter and John, ashamed of their sudden desertion of their master, had followed Him; and John, who was known to the high priest's household, obtained admittance for himself and his friend to the courtyard. There, around a fire of coals, the servants were gathered, discussing the strange events of the night, and among them the portress who kept the wicket beside the great street-gate watched Peter with curious eyes in the red glow of the fire-light. John was well known as a follower of Jesus, and she presently said, pointing to Peter, 'Thou also wast with the Nazarene.' But, taken by surprise, he denied it, and, uneasily leaving the fire, he withdrew into the shade of the arched gateway, while at the same moment the cock crew. The curious throng would not let him alone, but repeated the question, half bantering, half in earnest. Again he denied it with an oath, and a whole hour passed, which to him must have been one of misery, as they renewed their attacks upon him. At last a relative of Malchus, whose ear he had severed, asked him sternly, 'Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?' and others added that his Galilean dialect betrayed him. He felt as if he were brought to bay, and, desperately cursing and swear-

[1] This rending of the garments, usual among the Jews in mourning, was lawful for a high priest in cases of blasphemy alone.

ing he cried, 'I know not this Man of whom ye speak.'

Again the cock crew; and, lo, at this very moment Jesus was crossing the courtyard, bound and insulted, with the savage mob around Him. He turned and looked upon the man who a few brief hours ago was ready to lay down his life for His sake, and that glance of infinite sorrow mingled with love broke Peter's heart. He burst into tears of anguish and penitence, and rushed from the place where he had denied his Master. Like Judas, he fled into the night; but for him the dawn was at hand.

Jesus was led into the guard-room, where the spite and coarse tyranny of the servants who watched Him broke into open insult. They whiled away the chill hours till daybreak with every variety of taunt and mockery that vulgar insolence and hireling scorn could suggest, ridiculing His claim to the Messiahship; and so the time passed till He was summoned at dawn before the full session of the Sanhedrin for His first legal trial.[1]

Little remained for the Sanhedrists to do. They had already resolved on His death, and merely repeated the question, if He were the Son of God. 'Ye say that I am,' He answered in a well-known formula implying affirmation; and, declaring that they needed no further witness to His crime of blasphemy, the semicircle of judges broke up, to convey Him bound across the Tyropœon valley and up a long flight of steps to the Prætorium, where Pontius Pilate dwelt.[2] Of the

[1] It was against Jewish law to try a criminal by night.

[2] Pontius Pilate became procurator of Judæa in A. D. 26. He

Roman procurator they must demand His execution, for the Sanhedrin had lost the power of inflicting capital punishment, and they knew that the sooner Jesus was out of their hands the safer they would be from popular revolt.

Meanwhile the horror of his part in the terrible transaction had proved too much for Judas. When the gentle, majestic Master was really in the hands of His enemies the conscience of the betrayer suddenly awoke to a full sense of what he had done. Despair and remorse seized him. Hoping that even now he might be in time to rescue Jesus from the fate he heard was impending, he rushed to the Temple, where some of the priests had come from the trial to fulfil their morning duties of sacrifice. Wildly he flung down the pieces of silver before them, and declared, 'I have betrayed innocent blood.' 'What is that to us?' is the reply, which shows the depth of their callous infamy. 'See thou to that.'

This speech revealed to Judas what sort of men he had aided, and Jesus stood transfigured by the contrast,

offended the Jews by causing the silver eagles and other insignia of the legions to be suspended in Jerusalem, and by using some of the money from the Temple treasury for the purpose of building an aqueduct to supply Jerusalem with water, putting down with much severity the consequent insurrections. These, and similar affronts to their religion, produced a feeling of fierce bitterness among the Jews, while he, a thorough Roman, regarded them with contempt as troublesome fanatics whom he had to keep in order, and whose whims he was forced at times to conciliate. His official residence was at Cæsarea, but he had come as usual to Jerusalem to keep order during the feast.

It was all breaking upon him—the Saviour's character, his own unutterable guilt; and unable to bear the burden of life, maddened at the thought of having to watch Jesus die, he went and hanged himself; while the crafty partners of his crime, too scrupulous to use in the treasury the blood-money they had not been too scrupulous to pay, arranged for the purchase of a field with it 'to bury strangers in,' which bore the name of Aceldama, the field of blood.

If Judas had lived in contented respectability, making broad his phylacteries and giving alms, he would have been a worse man than when, despairing, unable to endure the burden of his remorse, he fled from life. Who shall say that the Infinite Mercy had no room for pity even upon him, as he poured out his existence in hopeless misery?

But let us leave questionings concerning the traitor's end to look upon his betrayed Master. He is standing before Pilate, while the Jews, unwilling to enter the house of a heathen (for that day they are to eat the *chagigah*, or peace-offering, an important part of the Passover festivity, and must not contract defilement), are crowding impatiently outside, waiting for the sentence they have demanded. Pilate is irritated in every way by their conduct, while he does not choose even to try to understand; they have roused him early, he supposes, to interfere in some of their religious disputes, which he regards with a mixture of contempt and dread. They will not enter the Prætorium for some absurd scruple of theirs, and he must needs go out to them.

'What is your accusation?' he curtly asks the chief priests and rulers. Their reply is equally brief and haughty: 'If he were not an evildoer we should not have delivered Him up unto thee.' 'But I am not going to execute offenders merely at your bidding,' said Pilate, in effect. 'Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.'

'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,' they answered, and poured forth a torrent of vague accusations against Jesus, of which the chief points were that He perverted the nation, 'forbade to give tribute to Cæsar,' and said He was Christ, a King. Pilate must have scornfully noted the first two charges, for he knew well enough that the accusers themselves had little love or loyalty to Cæsar; and, quoting the third alone, he asked his Prisoner, as it seems in wonder and pity, 'Art *Thou* the King of the Jews?' Weary and worn, with the traces on His brow of the agony in Gethsemane, the marks of scorn and insult on His person, His hands bound behind Him—well might the proud Roman procurator regard this charge as the veriest mockery ever offered to his ears. The brief conversation between the two recorded by St. John is of great value, as showing the reason of Pilate's strong impression in favor of Jesus and his subsequent attempts to save Him. He thought Him an innocent, unworldly idealist, the last man who would be dangerous as a political usurper 'What is *truth?*' he says to Him in utter, wondering pity, and impatience of unpractical speculations. 'What have I, a stern, matter-of-fact Roman governor, and you, a

prisoner in danger of your life, to do with such useless inquiries?' And, going out to the Jews, He says with emphasis that he finds no fault in this Man.

But they will not accept the acquittal, and clamor that He has been stirring up and teaching all the people from Galilee to Judæa.

From Galilee! He is a Galilean then, a subject of Herod Antipas. Pilate, glad to catch at some means of relieving himself from the hated task of trying such a Prisoner, straightway despatches Jesus to the tetrarch, who had come from Tiberias nominally to attend the Passover at Jerusalem, really to please the Jews and amuse himself. Herod Antipas and Pilate were at variance; but this act of seeming deference to his authority pleased the former greatly and ended in the reconciliation of the two men. As we have seen, Herod's fear and wonder had been excited some time ago on account of Jesus, and he hoped now he might see Him work some miracle. He questioned Him in many ways, but obtained no answer, nor any gratification for his curiosity. Therefore he with his soldiers ridiculed the mild, majestic Sufferer, setting Him at naught, arraying Him in the garments of a mock sovereignty, and finally sending Him back to Pilate.

Herod by his behavior, cruel and despicable as it was, had clearly shown that he thought the accusation a jest, and Pilate thoroughly agreed with him, yet he shrank from releasing his Prisoner in defiance of these Jewish dignitaries who had such influence with the nation. A tumult might be stirred up that he could only quell with difficulty, or they might find means to

PALESTINE THORNS.

injure him with the Emperor by the not unusual method of sending an embassy to complain at Rome. He therefore sought to temporize, and, calling them together, told them plainly that he found no evidence of the charge they had brought against Jesus, neither had Herod, who had sent Him back uncondemned; yet he does not take the obvious course of acquitting the Prisoner, but says he will scourge Jesus and let Him go. Even this release, as he adds in weak compromise, is not because He is innocent, but because it is the custom to free some prisoner in honor of the feast.

While Pilate, in exasperation and disturbance of spirit, sat thus upon the judgment seat which, in order that he might confer with the Jews, he had caused to be placed upon the tesselated pavement outside the Prætorium, a message was brought him from his wife, Claudia Procula: 'Have thou nothing to do with that righteous Man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.'

Pilate would only too gladly have yielded to her wishes. He knew perfectly well that the charge was groundless; as a Roman, familiar with the Twelve Tables, he was fully alive to the baselessness of popular opinion as a reason for judgment; but the mob was gathering strength, and, stirred up by the chief priests, was beginning to shout a demand for the release of Barabbas, a noted robber, instead of Jesus. In answer to his indignant query, which of the two men they would have, they clamored plainly enough, 'Not this Man, but Barabbas!' What was he to do? He would

cause Jesus to be scourged,[1] and would, by thus degrading Him in their eyes, try to satisfy their thirst for vengeance.

The Saviour underwent this terrible infliction at the hand of the brutal soldiers, who then placed a crown of twisted thorns upon His head, put a reed in His hands and invested Him, in place of the white robe Herod had put on Him, with some cast-off purple cloak from Pilate's wardrobe. Decked in these mock insignia of royalty, ridiculed and struck by the attendants, suffering from the torture He had just undergone, with drops of blood trickling from His brow, Pilate thought He would surely move the compassion of His most inveterate enemies, and His pretensions to kingship would be at once and forever overthrown.

'I bring Him out to you that ye may know that I find no crime in Him,' said the governor, as he returned to the judgment-seat with his silent, suffering Prisoner; and as Jesus stood there in sight of all the furious mob, Pilate added in strange, unconscious significance, 'BEHOLD THE MAN.' But they cried, 'Crucify Him! crucify Him!'

'Take Him yourselves and crucify Him!' cried Pilate, knowing that this was impossible, and stirred to bitterness and anger by their brutal, obstinate fanaticism. 'I find no fault in Him.' They answered him with raging exclamations that Jesus made Himself the Son of God.

Pilate, perhaps a little touched with awe at these

[1] Scourging was the usual preliminary to crucifixion among the Romans, and was inflicted with knotted thongs into which pieces of metal were introduced.

words and by the silent majesty of his Prisoner, took Him back into the Prætorium, to gain time and to relieve his increasing bewilderment. 'Whence art Thou?' he exclaimed. But Jesus answered nothing. When Pilate reminded Him that he had power to crucify or to release Him, He replied that he could have had no power at all against Him unless it had been Divinely allowed, and that the greater guilt rested with the Sanhedrin who had delivered Him up. In His infinite mercy He pitied the perplexed and irritated man before Him, swayed different ways by the considerations of duty and of interest, and Pilate knew it. Once more he tried to save Jesus. He went out and strove to pacify the mob, but it was useless. The people, hounded on by the determined priests, shouted and screamed in those transports of Oriental excitement which Europeans scarcely understand: 'Crucify Him! crucify Him!'[1]

Again and again the Roman assumed the unwonted position of a pleader for mercy on behalf of his Prisoner: 'Why, what evil hath He done?' But the multitude would hear no reason, and the cry, more alarming to Pilate's ear than any other, began to make itself audible: 'If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend; everyone that maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.'

Pilate knew the utter exasperating insincerity of

[1] It seems probable that the mob was mainly composed of the citizens of Jerusalem, among whom Jesus never was a favorite, and who had lately been exasperated by the injury He had done to their Temple buying and selling. The Galilean pilgrims were not likely to have much part in the outcry.

such an outcry from people who hated the Romans, and who had just asked for the release of a noted insurrectionist, but he dared not face the accusation embodied in the words. In one last hope to touch the pity of the people, he pointed to the majestic Sufferer beside him, with the crimson drops stealing from the cruel thorn-wreath on His brow, His beautiful, tender face worn with watching and agony, His dress of mock sovereignty stained with blood, and said, 'Behold your King!' Would not the contrast between the title and the piteous reality move their hearts? It was hopeless; 'Away with Him! away with Him! crucify Him!' they shouted.

'Shall I crucify your King?' asked Pilate in fierce and angry satire; and they answered with a cry of national degradation. 'We have no king but Cæsar.' Pilate gave up the struggle. He caused water to be brought out and washed his hands in presence of all the multitude saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this righteous Man; see ye to it.' And the answer came back, 'His blood be on us and our children.'

Surely a sadder story than that of Pontius Pilate has never been recorded—a story of cowardly compromise and unworthy betrayal of conscience, followed by a vain attempt to deny just responsibility. His concession was all in vain, for not long afterwards he was deprived of his office on the very charges he had tried to stave off by this yielding to popular feeling. Wearied out by misfortune, he finally perished by his own hand in banishment.

The sentence of crucifixion went forth, the purple

robe was replaced by the ordinary garments of Jesus, and the cross was brought for Him to bear to the place of execution. Two malefactors were chosen to be put to death at the same time, for it was thought well to seize the opportunity of the feast time with its vast concourse of strangers to strike terror into evil-doers. When the sad procession set forth upon it way Jesus was made to carry His cross. But the mental and physical agony He had undergone rendered Him unfit to bear the burden, and outside the gate the soldiers laid hands on one 'Simon of Cyrene,' whom they compelled to carry it in His stead to the place of execution. Many of those who loved Him—the Galilean pilgrims who knew Him well—the women who had attended Him—followed Him with bitter wailings and lamentations; but He thought rather of their coming calamities than of His suffering, as He turned to still their weeping.

CHAPTER XL.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

TO a spot outside the city, called, perhaps from its bare, rounded elevation, 'Golgotha,'[1] or 'the place of a skull,' the melancholy procession wound onward, between eight and nine o'clock on that Friday morning.

It was a merciful custom to give those who were condemned to the awful and lingering torments of the cross a stupefying draught of strong wine mixed with myrrh, provided at the cost of an association of charitable women in Jerusalem. This was offered to Jesus when He reached the place of execution, but He refused to drink, that He might know the full bitterness of death. And indeed crucifixion was of all modes of execution the most terrible. It was not of Jewish origin, but had been borrowed from the Phœnicians by the Romans,

[1] The popular expression '*Mount* Calvary' has no warrant in Scripture. Golgotha was the Hebrew word for 'a skull.' This, rendered κρανίον in Greek, is in the Authorized Version translated literally from the *Latin* word for a bare skull, *calvaria*, only in Luke xxiii. 33. It could not have been derived, as some suppose, from the skulls lying about, as this would have been contrary to Jewish law.

ANCIENT SARCOPHAGUS, WITH SCENES FROM THE PASSION.

who applied it chiefly to slaves and criminals of the lowest type. For hours, even for days, the victim might hang in unutterable anguish, till he died of thirst, starvation, and the effect of his wounds.

The cross was not the lofty erection with which pictures have made us familiar, but a roughly constructed instrument only high enough to raise the feet a few inches above the ground, with a wooden projection near the centre to support the body. The Sufferer was partly divested of His clothing, His arms were bound to the transverse piece, and huge iron nails were driven through the palm of each hand into the wood. Lastly, the feet were extended and fastened also to the cross, either by one nail through each or by a larger one through both. It does not seem clear whether He was bound to the cross before or after it was fixed in the ground; but if the former were the case, as many suppose, the moment when the upright piece was let fall into the hole prepared for it would be one of intense torture, and it may have been at this point of keenest agony that Jesus cried out in prayer for His murderers, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

Above His head they set an inscription bearing His accusation, as was usual in the case of criminals; and thus it ran: 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,' written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

Numbers of the leading Jews had come to watch the agony of their Victim, and as they caught sight of these words conspicuously placed above His head, it flashed upon their minds that Pilate intended an insult to *them*.

This indeed was the case: in his disgust and anger at the whole transaction, the governor avenged himself by publicly branding the Sufferer crucified between two thieves as the King of the proud hierarchy. They angrily expostulated, but Pilate would have no more of their interference, and refused to alter the title as they wished into 'He said, I am the King of the Jews.'

At the foot of the cross four soldiers with their centurion were keeping guard to prevent any attempt at rescue. They had appropriated the clothes of Jesus, and had divided His outer garments—the cloak, girdle, sandals, and head-gear—among them, casting lots for the more valuable under-garment, which like a priestly robe was woven in one piece. A great crowd surrounded Him; the hearts of many were breaking for pity, but the chief priests and scribes taunted Him with His past teaching: 'Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself!' 'Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross!'

How little they knew that through the cross He should reign as He could not have reigned from the proudest earthly Messianic throne! Others who stood near shamelessly taunted Him, and the thieves who were crucified with Him added their insults to the rest. But one of them, noticing the silence of Jesus under these cruel gibes, and perhaps discovering for the first time that He was the Teacher who had stirred many hearts, relapsed into thought which deepened into conviction. Doubtless he had heard His words on some former occasion, and perhaps had seen His

THE CRUCIFIXION.

miracles. The whole of the present conduct of Jesus —His refusal of the soothing draught, His self-forgetful prayer for His torturers, His majestic calmness under scorn and insult—bore out the impression previously made; and the man, rebuking his companion, exclaimed:

'Jesus, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!'

So the presence of the Divine Sufferer, meant to have degradation cast upon it by the companionship of thieves, raised one of the dying malefactors into nearness to Himself, for His gracious answer was:

'Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.'

From out the throng there had pressed near the cross four women who loved Him dearly—Mary of Magdala, Mary the wife of Clopas, Salome the wife of Zebedee, and her sister Mary, the mother of Jesus, who had come from her northern home to attend the Passover, little dreaming that her heart was to be thus cruelly riven. Turning His dim eyes on the poor mother and on John, who had not been far off since His examination before Caiaphas, Jesus said, in words of exquisite tenderness and thought for Mary, even in His dire anguish, 'Woman, behold thy son;' and to John, 'Behold thy mother.' He would not have her stay to witness His sufferings longer and John, in obedience to his Master, looked his last upon Him and took the heart-stricken mother away.

Thrice had Jesus spoken from the cross in words of love and mercy for others, and His last utterance con-

cerning His human relation to men was for His mother's sake. A darker period of His agony was yet to come, while His life slowly ebbed away; and in sympathy with the dread mystery a strange gloom spread over the land. It was noon, and the spring sun should have been pouring down its fierce, unclouded heat; but Jesus hung for three hours in shadow and silence. The taunts of His enemies had died away, perhaps through unconfessed misgiving and reluctant awe; many of the crowd had retreated, and others who remained were hushed by the strange and unwonted aspect of nature.

We purposely do not dwell on the physical torture of crucifixion, which combined within it all that death can contain of ghastly horror and lingering anguish. Jesus had endured its sharpest pangs for hours, and uttered no words save those of love and mercy; it was not mere bodily suffering therefore that prompted the mysterious, bitter cry none can ever fully understand, sent out of the very depths of a heart literally breaking for the sin and woe of the world: '*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*'—'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?'

He was tasting death for every man, and from out of His experience of this our nature's utmost need, when earth seems receding and God cannot be realized, came His cry—the voice of the humanity that was bound up in Jesus, the Representative of our race.

'He called on Elijah,' the bystanders said, misunderstanding His words; and when, in answer to the appeal, 'I thirst,' one dipped a sponge in the thin wine

the soldiers were drinking, and held it up to Him, they cried mockingly, 'Let be—let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down.'

The soldier put the sponge to His dying lips, though he echoed the jeer of his companions. But all was well-nigh over. 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit,' were His next words, showing that the terrible sense of desolate agony was past; and with the victorious utterance, 'IT IS FINISHED,' Jesus bowed His head and died.

MYRRH.

At that moment the veil of the Temple, which hung before the Most Holy Place, was suddenly rent from the top to the bottom. The ground was shaken by an earthquake, which rolled away the rocks that closed many of the sepulchres in the neighborhood, and fear fell on all beholders. The centurion whose duty it had been

to watch the long hours of the Saviour's agony had seen death in many shapes, but had never beheld such calm and patient majesty triumphing over

HYSSOP.

shameful torture. 'This was a righteous Man,' he exclaimed,—'the Son of God!'

The multitude, impressed and sobered by the strange

CHRIST TAKEN FROM THE CROSS.

portents they saw round them, began to fear that a meaning more solemn than they could grasp lay hidden in what had passed, and returned beating their breasts to Jerusalem. The sacerdotal party, however, anxious lest the coming Sabbath, which was a 'high day,'[1] should be defiled by bodies left hanging on the cross, appealed to Pilate to kill the sufferers and take them down before sunset. The soldiers accordingly came and broke the legs of the two thieves, which was a usual practice in crucifixion, followed always by a death-stroke from sword or lance. Jesus, they found, was dead already, at which Pilate wondered greatly, as He had only been six hours on the cross, and sufferers sometimes lingered in torment for two or three days. A soldier pierced His side with a spear, and the touch revealed that He had died literally of a broken heart,[1] for 'blood and water' poured forth in the sight of John, who had returned and was standing by the cross. Unwittingly therefore did these heathens fulfil the old prophecies: 'A bone of Him shall not be broken,' and 'They shall look on Him whom they have pierced.'[2]

Meanwhile Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, a member of the Sanhedrin, and a disciple, came to ask Pilate for the body of Jesus, throwing off the fatal timidity that had caused him to keep his adherence a secret

[1] It was the 16th Nisan, on which the sheaf of first-fruits, cut after sunset on the 15th, was solemnly offered in the Temple Courts.

[2] See a letter from the late Prof. Simpson to Dr. Hanna (*Last Day of our Lord's Passion*), pp. 333-343) and Dr. Stroud's treatise on the *Physical Cause of the Death of Christ.*

[1] Exod. xii. 46 ; Zech. xii. 10.

while the Master yet lived. He obtained a ready consent, and went to Calvary with the fine linen which he had prepared for the entombment. Nicodemus also, whom we have not seen since he ventured on a disguised defence of Jesus in the Sanhedrin, came with a lavish offering of sweet spices to bestrew the winding-sheet. Who shall tell what passion of tenderness and remorse shook these two hearts when they knew it was too late to stand by the living Master? With utmost loving care they took His lacerated form from the cross, wrapped it in the fragrant folds of the linen, and, while the women from Galilee lingered pitifully near, they bore it to the new tomb hewn out of a rock in the garden of Joseph. Here, in a resting-place polluted by no previous burial, they laid Him, closed the entrance with a stone in Jewish fashion, then sadly and silently they dispersed to their homes for the mournful Sabbath that should follow.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

AT the death of Christ His followers were utterdispirited and hopeless. The pangs of disappointed expectation, the misery of bereavement, sharpened by an agony of pity for the suffering of One they loved and reverenced beyond all telling, must have made them wretched indeed on that Sabbath-day. Not a week ago Jesus was entering Jerusalem with the joyous tumult around Him of popular enthusiasm, and now—where is He? Dead, by the shameful torture of a slave's punishment, while His enemies are scornful and triumphant. It is important to realize the attitude of His disciples. So little had they the 'courage of their convictions,' even before the condemnation of Jesus, that Peter, His boldest apostle, denied Him, and John, the most loving, forsook Him and fled. Now His crucifixion had seemed to end their hopes forever. What could transform this weak, desponding handful of disappointed and grieving followers into a strong, rejoicing band, who proclaimed their faith in spite of every variety of per-

secution, and who spoke with such fire and force of unshaken conviction that the world was perforce compelled to listen to their message? Nothing but the resurrection of Jesus. To account, apart from this, for the rise of Christianity after His death is surely an impossible task.

On the day following the entombment, probably in the evening when the Sabbath was over, a deputation of the Jews obtained a scornful permission from Pilate to protect the entrance to the tomb of Jesus by a guard, lest the disciples should steal away His body. His bereaved friends apparently knew nothing of this, for early in the morning of the Sunday, now known as Easter-day, when the darkness was just fading into gray dawn, a little band of women—Mary of Magdala, Mary the wife of Clopas, Salome, and Joanna—drew near the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. Their hearts were aching with a tenderness robbed of its object, which prompted a pitiful anxiety to do something even for His lifeless form—that form which they had so lately seen wrung with agony. Perhaps, too, the hurry of the entombment on the Friday evening had jarred upon their loving reverence; and they now brought spices with which to anoint His body. It can hardly be that, as they approached the garden, they felt something of the shock that made the earth tremble when the angel of the Lord flashed upon the terrified watchers, for their talk was all of the heavy rock at the mouth of the cave. 'Who shall roll it away?' they asked one another; but as they drew near they found it was gone. They knew nothing of the seal or the

guard; and, indeed, the latter seem to have fled in consternation; but they leaped at once to the conclusion that the body of Jesus had been violently taken away and thrown into the common grave of malefactors. Mary of Magdala left her calmer companions to investigate further, and rushed straight to Peter and to John with the piteous story, 'They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb.' [1]

Meanwhile the elder women had entered the cave; but, instead of the lifeless form of Jesus, they saw a 'young man, sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe,' [2] who in gracious words told them that Jesus the Nazarene was risen, and bade them see the place where He had been laid. 'Go, tell His disciples *and Peter*,' added the angel, with tender special mention of the one who had betrayed his Lord, 'He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.'

They fled in mingled joy and terror, and though they met John and Peter coming to the tomb in accordance with Mary's distressed summons, their amazement and bewilderment were too great to allow them to stop or

[1] Professor Westcott points out the differences of purpose in the story of the Evangelists. Matthew dwells chiefly on the majesty and glory of the Resurrection; Mark insists on it as a fact; Luke is concerned with its spiritual significance; John shows the effect it produced on different natures (*Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, 310–315). The description in the text is taken from a careful comparison of the four accounts, which are thus seen to present no difficulty that cannot be easily explained.

[2] Luke says there were two angels, but Matthew and Mark only mention one.

speak; perhaps, indeed, they scarcely recognized them.[1] John outran Peter, and looking into the grave saw the linen clothes lying on the ground. He did not go in, but Peter, when he came up, went at once into the cave. There was no trace of any struggle; the napkin that had bound His face lay neatly folded up apart from the other grave-clothes. John then entered, and as he looked round the quiet, empty recess, he felt the glorious truth of what had happened stealing into his soul.

They left the spot; and now Mary of Magdala, who after telling her story had probably followed the two disciples at a distance as fast as her wearied feet would let her, drew near once more. She stood by the cave, weeping bitterly; for this last indignity offered, as she supposed, to Jesus, the absence of His lacerated body, on which she could lavish her farewell offices of love, wrung her very heart. She looked into the tomb; and here the angelic vision that had not appeared to Peter and John was revealed to her; but her eyes, dimmed with tears, saw only two white-robed youths. 'Woman, why, weepest thou?' they asked; 'Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him,' she replied; but as she turned Jesus stood beside her. She did not know Him; perchance for

[1] St. Mark says, 'trembling and astonishment had come upon them, and they *said nothing to anyone*, for they were afraid.' This is doubtless Peter's version of the way in which the women passed John and himself, for Matthew says, 'they ran to bring His disciples word.' Mark derived the incidents of his Gospel from Peter, who would be impressed by the women, after such a revelation, flying past him without speech.

weeping, perchance, too, because there was something unfamiliar in His appearance, and she was evidently standing[1] where she was not face to face with Him. To His question, 'Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?' she eagerly replied, thinking perhaps He was the gardener:

'Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.'

'Mary!'

That familiar word, uttered in His beloved voice, recalled her at once from depths of grief to raptures of unspeakable joy. Nothing could she utter as she fell at His feet save only 'Rabboni!'—'O my Master!' He gently checked her transports of adoration; the time now was for work, not for ecstasy, and therefore He bade her go and tell His *brethren*—as for the first time He calls His disciples—of His coming ascension to the Father and God who was theirs and His alike. She obeyed Him, and carried back the glorious, solemn message, 'I HAVE SEEN THE LORD.'

It seems that Jesus also appeared to the other women on their way, and they 'took hold of His feet and worshipped Him.' He bade them likewise carry the tidings to His brethren, directing them to go into Galilee, there to see Him. But the message was apparently received with disbelief by the mourning disciples, who probably thought that sorrow, working upon womanly imagination, had produced an hysteric vision. John only, as he himself records, believed.

[1] John xx. 16.

The news of the empty grave spread rapidly through Jerusalem, and the Sanhedrin, angry and perplexed, bribed the soldiers of the guard, who came to them in much consternation, to say that the disciples had stolen the body while they slept. And if so flagrant a breach of duty as sleeping upon guard should reach the governor's ears, they, the leading Jews, potent with Pilate as they were, would contrive to secure them from punishment.

The disciples were not long to remain unconvinced. Jesus appeared to Peter,[1] but nothing except the fact of the interview is known to us. The details of the meeting between the Master and His penitent apostle were of too private and sacred a character to be divulged.

On the same day two of Christ's followers, one of whom was named Cleopas,[2] were sadly going from Jerusalem to Emmaus,[3] a village seven or eight miles away from the city. As they walked, conversing of all that had happened, the apparent downfall of their hopes, and the cruel death of their Leader, a Stranger, journeying the same road as themselves, drew near and inquired what subject engrossed them so earnestly in talk. It was the feast time, when mirth and joy should be universal; but they paused with sad looks, and asked if this Man were really a stranger in Jerusalem, that

[1] Luke xxiv. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 5.

[2] Not to be confounded with the husband of Mary and father of James 'the Little,' whose name (Clopas) is spelt differently.

[3] The name means 'hot springs.' Various conjectures have been made respecting the site, but it remains uncertain.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

He should wonder at their mournful conversation over all the things that had just transpired.

'What things?' He inquired. Then they told Him of their Prophet, so gentle and mighty in deed, so wonderful in teaching, who yet had been delivered up to death by the Sanhedrin. 'We hoped that it was He which should redeem Israel,' they sorrowfully added; and then they told how they had been amazed by certain women who, early on this the third day after His crucifixion, had visited the tomb and seen a vision of angels, but Him they saw not.[1]

'O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!' He said in gentle reproof. A sudden flash of interest breaks upon them; this Stranger, then, knows something of the one theme that engages their attention. They listen eagerly as He shows them that through all the Old Testament ran the prophecy that the Christ should indeed suffer before He entered into His glory. In such wonderful converse the rugged way seems short and easy; the afternoon heat is forgotten. They reach Emmaus all too soon, and when the Stranger seems as if He is going further, they beg Him to enter their house: 'Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent.'

He complied; and as He sat with them at their table and blessed the bread that He brake and gave to them,

[1] This refers to the first report rought by Mary, the wife of Clopas, Salome, and Joanna from the tomb before Jesus appeared to them; the travellers had not heard the news of Mary of Magdala.

something in His words or action revealed the Lord. It was He! but even as they knew Him He vanished out of their sight.

'Was not our heart burning within us while He spake to us in the way, while He opened to us the Scriptures?' they rapturously cried one to another; and now the long, toilsome miles back to Jerusalem fly beneath their eager feet, and they rush into the room where the apostles and other disciples are assembled, to bring the joyous tidings. They are met with no incredulity, but with glad belief. 'The Lord *is* risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon;' and so, in happy interchange of the wonderful things they have seen and heard, they spend the evening of that immortal Easter-day.

While they were talking, and after Thomas Didymus seems to have left the company, suddenly Jesus stood in the midst of them. The doors were closed for fear of the Jews, and had not opened for His entrance. His form had lost its familiarity; and in that awful yet beloved Presence the disciples shivered for terror, supposing that they beheld a spirit. With His own inimitable gentleness, He sought to reassure them, pointing out that His form was not that of a phantom, and showing them His hands and feet. John, in his tranquil, undoubting way, records, 'Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord;' but Jesus, seeing that rapture, fear, love, and incredulity were struggling in the hearts of the others, comforted them still further by sharing their simple meal.

Then 'opened He their minds that they might

CHRIST APPEARING TO HIS DISCIPLES.

understand the Scriptures,' and after words of consecration to their task of witnessing for Him, He vanished from their sight; but they doubted no longer. The last shred of unbelief had been torn away, and they rejoiced with full confidence and triumph during the week that followed.

All except *one*—that was Thomas Didymus, who not having seen the Lord himself, mournfully resisted the efforts of the disciples to comfort him. 'Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe,' he insisted. He loved Jesus dearly—had taken a despondent view of His errand to raise Lazarus, yet had been willing to die with Him; and to his affectionate but timid nature the spectacle of the rejoicing disciples must have been a tantalizing contrast to his own state of doubt and misery. Not Mary's rapturous story of that meeting in the garden, nor the tale of her companions, nor the brief assertion of Peter that the Lord had met him alone, nor the tale of Cleopas and his friend, nor yet the story of the whole company who had seen Him, brought conviction to his mind. But on the day week [1] of that glorious '*first day*,' which had already become sacred to the apostles as their time of meeting, Jesus stood again in the midst of the assembly, and bade Thomas see and touch His hands and His side. 'My

[1] We do not know why the disciples did not go at once to Galilee. Perhaps they waited for the end of the feast, or obeyed some unrecorded direction of Jesus.

Lord and my God!' were his words of utter instantaneous homage and conviction, while the Saviour, remembering all who should in future days long for the sight of Him, and should yet lay hold of Him by faith, said:

'Because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.'

The disciples now left Jerusalem for awhile, to await the further commands of their risen Lord in Galilee, as He had bidden them. While they were living in this state of expectancy some of them returned to their former occupation as fishermen. Their outward life was the same as of old, but what a mighty difference there was within!

One night Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James and John, with two other disciples (probably Andrew and Philip), went out on the familiar waters of the lake. All night they toiled, but they caught nothing; and in the chill dawn, as they were making for the shore, they saw One standing on the beach, who called to ask them if their fishing had been successful. They shouted a negative, and in reply He bade them let down the net on the right side of the boat. This they did, and were scarcely able to draw it out again for the multitude of fishes. The memory of a like occurrence in the past awoke with irresistible force in the breast of John, and he whispered to Peter, 'It is the Lord.'

Slow to discern but swift to act, Peter tightened his fisher's coat about him, and leapt into the shallow waters, swimming and wading to land, while the others

followed in their boat. How he must have longed to know from the lips of Jesus whether he might, notwithstanding his denial, be admitted to the honor that was promised three eventful years ago, of work for the Master! There was much of the old happy intercourse in the scene that followed, for a fire was lighted on the shore, and food was already prepared for the hungry men. Jesus bade them bring more fish from the pile of that which they had caught, and Simon started from his Master's side to draw the heavy net ashore with its contents. They counted the fishes—a hundred and fifty-three, yet the meshes were not broken; then, as they must have done over and over again in the early days, they sat down for their simple outdoor meal, while Jesus gave them fish and bread. None of them durst say, 'Who art Thou?' They were content to be silent in happy, unquestioning reverence, knowing that it was their Lord.

When the meal was ended Jesus said to Peter, addressing him not by his old name, 'the Rock,' of which his denial had deprived him for a time, and recalling to him his boastful words, 'Although all shall be offended, yet will not I;'

'Simon, son of John, lovest[1] thou Me more than these?'

'Yea, Lord,' he answered; 'Thou knowest that I dearly love Thee.'

[1] The word employed for love the first and second time by Jesus (ἀγαπᾶς) implies affection and esteem, but not the warm personal love of the term (Φιλέω) used each time by Peter; which Jesus adopts the third time, as if overpowered by his earnestness.

'Feed My lambs,' He answered.

Again came the question:

'Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?'

'Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I dearly love Thee.'

'Tend My sheep.'

Once more Jesus asked, this time adopting the word used by Peter himself:

'Simon, son of John, dost thou dearly love Me?'

Peter, hurt and distressed at this third repetition of the question, exclaimed:

'Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee dearly.'

'Feed My sheep,' answered Jesus. Thrice Peter had denied Him; thrice the Master had graciously allowed him to make open reparation for his fault by confession of attachment; and thrice He had given him commands as to the tending and nourishment of His flock. Thus with exquisite tact and tenderness did Jesus take away the stigma that must have adhered to Peter in the eyes of the other disciples after his denial in the hour of need. Now, publicly entrusted with his Master's work, he could go forth without shame as one of the foremost apostles.

In solemn words Jesus signified to Peter that he, too, should die by crucifixion, and added, 'Follow Me.' Taking the latter words literally, Peter stepped after his Master along the shore of the lake, and seeing that John also was following, he expressed anxiety to learn his friend's fate as well as his own. 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me,' replied Jesus. Hence the rumor went forth that John

THE ASCENSION.

was not to die, but, as he quietly explains, that was not what was said; the Saviour was merely checking Peter's curiosity by the warning that his chief concern lay in his own duty to his Lord.

So the Saviour passed from sight that early morning; but He was seen again on a hill in Galilee by more than five hundred of His disciples, who gathered there with the Eleven at a fixed time. Perhaps it was the grassy platform of Kurn Hattin, where He had uttered the Beatitudes; but of this we cannot be certain; we only know that somewhere in the scenes of His early ministry He appeared to a large company who had followed Him, and bade them teach and baptize through all the nations. Each was to be a messenger for Him, and His presence should be with them always, even to the end of the world. They worshipped Him in faith and rapture; only here and there were some who could not believe that He really was the crucified Jesus risen from the dead. St. Paul tells us that Jesus also appeared to James, but of this we have no further account. We know, however, that whereas the Lord's brethren during His lifetime did not believe on Him,[1] and sought to prevent Him from being at large, after His death His brother James became the head of the Christian Church in Jerusalem, and worked unweariyingly in the cause of Christ.

For forty days after His resurrection Jesus remained upon earth, not visible constantly to His disciples, but appearing, as we have seen, from time to time. Much

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 7; John vii. 5; Mark iii. 21.

did they learn in those seasons of rapt communion with their Lord. His words had indeed been fulfilled, 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you,' for now they were fortified with a knowledge that should read the mystery of life and death, and should enable them to spend the one and confront the other in glad testimony to the truth.

The day had come when His earthly presence was to be caught away from them, that He might be with them in another and even a better sense. He met them at Jerusalem and led them out towards Bethany upon the path they had so often trodden by His side. As they went they eagerly asked Him if He would restore the kingdom to Israel; but He checked their vain questioning, and bade them wait at Jerusalem until they received the promised Spirit, who should fit them to be witnesses for Him in all Judæa and Samaria, and the 'uttermost part of the earth.'

They reached the solitary uplands round Bethany, and lifting up His pierced hands He blessed them for the last time. While they worshipped Him He was 'parted from them,' ascending from the earth and hidden in a bright cloud that hovered above them. With straining gaze and eager longing they watched the cloud rise higher and higher till it was lost in the blue vault of heaven; and as they looked they became aware of two angels by their side, who spoke to them in comforting words of the future advent of their Lord.

Yet they scarcely needed comfort. So bright and radiant were their hopes, so firm the faith springing

from their late communion with Him, that they seemed to tread on air as they went back to Jerusalem, thinking and talking of all that He did and said, and discerning fresh light hour by hour in His wonderful life and death. When they reached the city they were 'continually in the Temple,' giving utterance to their joy and thankfulness by praising the God whom Jesus had made fully known to them.

THE SCENE OF THE ASCENSION.

Thus we have followed His earthly history. We have seen Him as a stainless Child; as the Teacher, pure and passionate for the truth of God; as the merciful Healer of all earthly ills—yet more as the Great Physician of the soul; then as the Sacrifice for the sins of men and as the triumphant and victorious Redeemer. His life will have been traced to little purpose if it has not given a deeper admiration, a warmer love for Him, and a yearning to obey His command, 'Follow thou Me.'

And it is not merely as a beautiful story of the past that we must read His life. Through all the centuries of Christianity He has been in the world, silently leavening society by successive aspects of His teaching, and He can still be as near us, though not in bodily form, as when He trod the fields of Palestine.

> For warm, sweet, tender, even yet
> A present help is He;
> And faith has still its Olivet,
> And love its Galilee.

May every reader know more and more the joy of His abiding Presence, and learn the mystery of His love!

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

OF THE GOSPEL HISTORY,

WITH SOME CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.

Date.	Event.	Page.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
B. C. 6. Feast of Tabernacles	Birth of John foretold	—	—	—	i. 5–25	—
B. C. 5. Six months later	Birth of Jesus foretold	14	—	—	i. 26–38	—
	Mary visits Elisabeth	15	—	—	i. 39–56	—
B. C. 5	Birth of John	—	—	—	i. 57–80	—
	An angel appears to Joseph	—	i. 18–25	—	—	—
Close of B.C. 5,	Birth of Jesus	21	i. 25	—	ii. 1–7	—
or early in B.C. 4	Angelic mission to the shepherds	22	—	—	ii. 8–20	—
B.C. 4	Circumcision of Jesus, and presentation in the Temple	25	—	—	ii. 21–38	—
	Visit of the Magi	30	ii. 1–12	—	—	—
	Flight into Egypt. Massacre of the Innocents	33	ii. 13–18	—	—	—
Shortly before	Death of Herod the Great	35	ii. 19	—	—	—
Passover, B. C. 4	Archelaus succeeds his father in Judæa, Samaria, and Idumæa, Herod Antipas in Galilee and Peræa	35	ii. 22	—	—	—
	Return of the Holy Family from Egypt to Nazareth	39	ii. 19–23	—	ii. 39, 40	—
A. D. 6	Archelaus deposed, and Judæa placed under a Roman Procurator	46	—	—	—	—
A. D. 8	Jesus, at the age of twelve, visits Jerusalem for the Passover	51	—	—	ii. 41–52	—
August, A. D. 14	Augustus dies; Tiberius succeeds	64	—	—	—	—
A. D. 26	John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness of Judæa, and baptizes in the Jordan	68	iii. 1–12	i. 1–8	iii. 1–18	—

Early A.D. 27	Baptism of Jesus	70	iii. 13–17	i. 9–11	iii. 21–23	—
	Jesus tempted in the desert	75	iv. 1–11	i. 12, 13	iv. 1–13	—
	Testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus, who returns, six weeks after His baptism, to the Jordan	80	—	—	—	i. 15–34
	Call of the first disciples	81	—	—	—	i. 35–51
	Jesus returns to Galilee. *First miracle*, at the marriage in Cana. He visits Capernaum for a short time	87	—	—	—	ii. 1–12
First Year of Ministry—from the First to the Second Passover of Our Lord's public life. (*Nisan,** A.D. 27, *to Nisan*, A.D. 28.)						
A.D. 27	Jesus comes from Capernaum to Jerusalem for the Passover. He cleanses the Temple	95	—	—	—	ii. 13–25
	Nicodemus visits Jesus by night	100	—	—	—	iii. 1–21
	Jesus leaves Jerusalem, but remains in Judæa for a time, while His disciples baptize in the Jordan. Closing testimony of John the Baptist	102	—	—	—	iii. 22–36
January, A.D. 28	Jesus departs for Galilee, after John is thrown into prison	104	iv. 12	i. 14	iv. 14	iv. 1–3
A.D. 28	Jesus visits Sychar, and wins belief from many Samaritans	107	—	—	iii. 19, 20 —	iv. 4–42
	He begins His Galilean ministry	115	iv. 12–17	i. 14, 15	iv. 14, 15	iv. 43–45
	Healing of the courtier's son at Cana	116	—	—	—	iv. 46–54

* Nisan corresponds to part of March and April.

Date.	Event.	Page.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
A. D. 28	Jesus visits Nazareth, teaches in the synagogue, and is rejected	121	—	—	iv. 16–30	—
	Call of Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John. Miraculous draught of fishes	127	iv. 18–22	i. 16–20	v. 1–11	—
	Sabbath at Capernaum; healing of a demoniac, Peter's mother-in-law, and many others	132	viii. 14–17	i. 21–34	iv. 31–41	—
	First circuit throughout Galilee of Jesus with His disciples	135	iv. 23–25	i. 35–39	iv. 42–44	—
	He heals a leper, and withdraws from the multitude	135	viii. 2–4	i. 40–45	v. 12–16	—
	Cure of the paralytic at Capernaum	137	ix. 2–8	ii. 1–12	v. 17–26	—
	Call of Matthew, or Levi	139	ix. 9	ii. 13, 14	v. 27, 28	—
	Second Year of Ministry—from the Second Passover to the Third. (Nisan, A. D. 28, to Nisan, A. D. 29.)					
	Jesus visits Jerusalem for the Passover, and heals an infirm man on the Sabbath. The Jews seek to put Him to death	141	—	—	—	v. 1–47
	Jesus, on the way back to Galilee, justifies the disciples to the Pharisees for plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath	147	xii. 1–8	ii. 23–28	vi. 1–5	—
	Jesus heals a withered hand on the Sabbath	151	xii. 9–14	iii. 1–6	vi. 6–11	—

He teaches and heals on the shore of the Lake of Galilee	153	xii. 15–21	iii. 7–12	—	—
He retires to a mountain, and, after a night of prayer, chooses the Twelve	154	x. 2–4	iii. 13–19	vi. 12–19	—
The Sermon on the Mount	161	v. 1–viii. 1	—	vi. 20–49	—
He returns to Capernaum. His kindred wish to restrain Him	168	—	iii. 20–21	vii. 1	—
Healing of the centurion's servant	171	viii. 5–13	—	vii. 2–10	—
Raising of the widow's son at Nain	175	—	—	vii. 11–17	—
Message from John the Baptist to Jesus, and reply	176	xi. 2–19	—	vii. 18–35	—
Jesus upbraids the impenitent cities; invites the weary and heavy laden	179	xi. 20–30	—	—	—
Jesus, at a Pharisee's table, is anointed by a penitent woman, and relates the parable of the Two Debtors	179	—	—	vii. 36–50	—
Second circuit through Galilee	183	—	—	viii. 1–3	—
Healing of a blind and dumb demoniac, for which the Pharisees accuse Him	183	xii. 22–37	iii. 22–30	xi. 14–23	—
Jesus condemns the request of the Pharisees for a sign	184	xii. 38–45	—	xi. 16, 24–36	—
Reply of Jesus when told that His mother and His brethern were seeking Him	186	xii. 46–50	iii. 31–35	viii. 19–21	—
Discourse of Jesus at the Pharisee's table	187	—	—	xi. 37–54	—

Date.	Event.	Page.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
A. D. 28	Discourse to the multitude on hypocrisy and worldliness	190	—	—	xii. 1–59	—
	Jesus teaches from a boat on the lake. Parable of the Sower	193	xiii. 1–23	iv. 1–25	viii. 4–18	—
	Parables of the Tares, the Mustard-seed, the Leaven, the Hidden Treasure, the Pearl, the Draw-Net	194	xiii. 24–53	iv. 26–34	—	—
	Jesus crosses the lake and stills a tempest	197	viii. 18–27	iv. 35–41	viii. 22–25, ix. 57–62	—
	The demoniacs of Gadara	199	viii. 28–34, ix. 1	v. 1–21	viii. 26–40	—
	Feast at Levi's house	201	ix. 10–13	ii. 15–17	v. 29–32	—
	Question of John's disciples concerning fasting, and reply of Jesus	202	ix. 14–17	ii. 18–22	v. 33–39	—
	Raising of Jairus' daughter, and healing of the woman who touched Jesus	203	ix. 18–26	v. 22–43	viii. 41–56	—
	Two blind men healed, and a dumb spirit cast out	205	ix. 27–34	—	—	—
	Jesus preaches a second time at Nazareth, and is rejected	207	xiii. 54–58	vi. 1–6	—	—
	A third circuit through Galilee. The twelve apostles sent forth	208	ix. 35–xi. 1	vi. 6–13	ix. 1–6	—
A. D. 29	John the Baptist beheaded by Herod Antipas. Herod hears of Jesus	210	xiv. 1–12	vi. 14–29	ix. 7–9	—

.....	The Twelve return to Jesus. He retires with them to the neighborhood of Bethsaida Julias, and feeds five thousand	218	xiv. 13–21	vi. 30–44	ix. 10–17	vi. 1–14
.....	The disciples recross the Sea of Galilee. Jesus comes to them by night upon the water. They arrive at Gennesareth, and crowds resort to Him	227	xiv. 22–36	vi. 45–56	—	vi. 15–21
cut out	The people find Jesus at Capernaum. Discourse on the Bread from Heaven. Coldness of many of his followers. Peter's confession.	227	—	—	—	vi. 22–71, vii. 1

Third Year of Ministry—from the Third Passover of Our Lord's Ministry, which He did not celebrate at Jerusalem, until a week before His death. (*Nisan* A. D. 29, *to Nisan* A. D. 30.)

A. D. 29	Jesus absents Himself from the Passover	233	—	—	—	vii. 1 (comp. vi. 4)
	Discussion with the Pharisees concerning the tradition of the elders	233	xv. 1–20	vii. 1–23	—	—
	Jesus goes to the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon. The Syrophœnician woman	236	xv. 21–28	vii. 24–30	—	—
	Jesus returns through Decapolis to the eastern shore of the lake, heals many, including one deaf and dumb, and feeds four thousand	241	xv. 29–38	vii. 31, viii. 9	—	—

Date.	Event.	Page.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
A. D. 29	He crosses to Dalmanutha. The Pharisees and Sadducees again demand a sign	242	xv. 39 xvi. 1–4	viii. 10–12	—	—
	He recrosses to the eastern shore	245	xvi. 4–12	viii. 13–21	—	—
	A blind man healed at Bethsaida Julias	246	—	viii. 22–26	—	—
	Jesus goes to Cæsarea Philippi. Discourse with His disciples and Peter's confession	249	xvi. 13–28	viii. 27–38, ix. 1	ix. 18–27	—
	The Transfiguration	259	xvii. 1–13	ix. 2–13	ix. 28–36	—
	Healing of the demoniac boy	263	xvii. 14–21	ix. 14–29	ix. 37–43	—
	Jesus repeats the prophecy of His death and resurrection	265	xvii. 22, 23	ix. 30–32	ix. 44, 45	—
	Payment of the Temple tax at Capernaum	266	xvii. 24–27	—	—	—
	Dispute of the disciples for pre-eminence. Jesus exhorts them to humility and charity	269	xviii. 1–35	ix. 33–50	ix. 46–50	—
October A. D. 29	Jesus goes up to the Feast of Tabernacles, and teaches in the Temple	274	—	—	—	vii. 2–53
	A sinful woman brought to Him for judgment	278	—	—	—	viii. 1–11
	Jesus declares Himself the light of the world. The Jews seek to stone Him	280	—	—	—	viii. 12–59
	Cure of the man born blind. Subsequent arguments and discourse	283	—	—	—	ix. 1–41 x. 1–21

	Jesus, having returned to Galilee, hears of the slaughter of certain Galileans. Parable of the Barren Fig-tree.	290	—	—	xiii. 1–9	—
	He sends forth the Seventy to Peræa	291	—	—	x. 1–16	—
	He finally leaves Galilee and sets His face to go to Jerusalem	291	xix. 1, 2	x. 1	ix. 51	—
	A Samaritan village refuses to receive Him	292	—	—	ix. 52–56	—
Between October and December, A. D. 29	He warns His followers of the requirements of true discipleship	295	—	—	xiv. 25–35	—
	Cure of ten lepers on the borders of Samaria and Galilee	295	—	—	xvii. 11–19	—
	Some Pharisees bid Him escape from Herod's dominions as He journeys through Peræa	296	—	—	xiii. 31–35	—
	Cure of the crippled woman. He teaches in Peræa	298	—	—	xiii. 10–30	—
	Jesus dines at a Pharisee's house on the Sabbath. Cure of a man with the dropsy. Parable of the Great Supper	300	—	—	xiv. 1–24	—
	Parable of the Unjust Steward	303	—	—	xvi. 1–13	—
	Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus	304	—	—	xvi. 14–31	—
	The lawyer's question. Parable of the Good Samaritan	304	—	—	x. 26–37	—
	Return of the Seventy	306	—	—	x. 17–24	—
	The disciples again taught how to pray	—	—	—	xi. 1–13	—

Date.	Event.	Page.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
Between October and December, A. D. 29	Parables of the Importunate Friend, the Unjust Judge, the Pharisee and Publican	309	—	—	xviii. 1–14	—
	Publicans and sinners crowd to Jesus. Parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Drachma, and the Prodigal Son	309	—	—	xv. 1–32	—
	Discourse respecting the Kingdom of God	313	—	—	xvii. 20–37	—
	Jesus at Bethany	315	—	—	x. 38–42	—
December, A. D. 29	He goes to the Feast of Dedication, The Jews seek to seize Him, and He retires into Peræa again	320	—	—	—	x. 22–42
A. D. 30	Precepts concerning divorce	325	xix. 3–13	x. 2–12	—	—
	Jesus blesses little children	325	xix. 13–15	x. 13–16	xviii. 15–17	—
	The rich young ruler. Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard	326	xix. 16–30 xx. 1–16	x. 17–31	xviii. 18–30	—
	Jesus hears of the illness of Lazarus, goes to Bethany, and raises him from the dead	332	—	—	—	xi. 1–46
	The Sanhedrin resolve to compass His death. He withdraws to Ephraim	337	—	—	—	xi. 47–54
	For the third time He prophesies His death and resurrection on the way from Ephraim to Jerusalem	343	xx. 17–19	x. 32–34	xviii. 31–34	—
	Request of Salome	344	xx. 20–28	x. 35–45	—	—

	Healing of two blind men near Jericho	346	xx. 29–34	x. 46–52	xviii. 35–43 xix. 1	—
	Visit to Zacchæus	347	—	—	xix. 2–10	—
	Parable of the Pounds	348	—	—	xix. 11–28	—
	The Last Passover Week.					
A. D. 30 Friday, Nisan 8 (March 31)	Jesus arrives at Bethany. Public interest concerning Him	350	—	—	—	xi. 55–57 xii. 1, 9–11
Saturday, Nisan 9 (April 1)	Sabbath at Bethany. After sunset, a feast is made in the house of Simon the leper, and Mary anoints Jesus. Disappointment and treachery of Judas	351	xxvi. 6–16	xiv. 3–11		xii. 2–8
Sunday, Nisan 10 (April 2)	Public entry of Jesus to Jerusalem. He returns at evening to Bethany	355	xxi. 1–11	xi. 1–11	xix. 29–44	xii. 12–19
Monday, Nisan 11 (April 3)	Jesus condemns the barren fig-tree; again cleanses the Temple	364	xxi. 12–17	xi. 12–19	xix. 45–48	—
	Certain Greeks wish to see Jesus. A voice from heaven	—	—	—	—	xii. 20–36
Tuesday, Nisan 12 (April 4)	The fig-tree found withered. Lesson on faith and forgiveness	372	xxi. 18–22	xi. 20–26	—	—
	Last day of the public ministry of Jesus. He defeats His enemies in argument; utters the parables of the Two Sons, the Wicked Husbandmen and the Marriage of the King's Son	374	xxi. 23–46, xxii., xxiii.	xi. 27–33 xii. 1–40	xx., xxi. 37, 38	—

Date.	Event.	Page.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
A. D. 30	The widow's offering	382	—	xii. 41–44	xxi. 1–4	—
Tuesday, Nisan 12 (April 4)	Jesus leaves the Temple and on the Mount of Olives predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and end of the world. Parables of the Ten Virgins and the Five Talents	383	xxiv., xxv.	xiii. 1–37	xxi. 5–36	—
	The Sanhedrin arrange with Judas to seize Him	389	xxvi. 1–5	xiv. 1, 2	xxii. 1–6	—
Wednesday, Nisan 13 (April 5)	Spent in solitude, no record	390	—	—	—	—
Thursday, Nisan 14 (April 6)	Jesus sends His disciples to make preparation for eating the Passover. He celebrates the Paschal meal with them	390	xxvi. 17–20	xiv. 12–17	xxii. 7–16	—
	Jesus washes His disciples' feet, after a dispute for supremacy among them	395	—	—	xxii. 24–30	xiii. 1–20
	He foretells His betrayal. Judas goes out	396	xxvi. 21–25	xiv. 18–21	xxii. 21–23	xiii. 21–35
	Institution of the Lord's supper (1 Cor. xi. 23–25)	397	xxvi. 26–29	xiv. 22–25	xxii. 17–20	—
	He foretells the denial of Peter and dispersion of the apostles	400	xxvi. 31–35	xiv. 27–31	xxii. 31–38	xiii. 36–38
	Farewell discourse of Jesus and prayer for His disciples	400	—	—	—	xiv., xv., xvi., xvii.
	His agony in Gethsemane	405	xxvi. 30, 36–46	xiv. 26, 32–42	xxii. 39–46	xviii. 1
	His betrayal and arrest	406	xxvi. 47–56	xiv. 43–52	xxii. 47–53	xviii. 2–12

Friday, Nisan 15 (April 7)	He is brought before Annas and Caiaphas in the night, Peter denies Him. He is brought in the morning before the Sanhedrin	408	xxvi. 57–75 xxvii. 1	xiv. 53–72 xv. 1	xxii. 54–71	xviii. 13–27
	He is taken before Pilate	409	xxvii. 1, 2, 11–14	xv. 1–5	xxiii. 1–5	xviii. 28–38
	Remorse and death of Judas (Acts i. 18, 19)	410	xxvii. 3–10	—	—	—
	Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, who sends Him back to Pilate	418		—	xxiii. 6–12	—
	Pilate attempts repeatedly to release Him, but finally delivers Him up to be crucified	425	xxvii. 15–30	xv. 6–19	xxiii. 13–25	xviii. 39 to xix. 16
	The Crucifixion	431	xxvii. 31–44	xv. 20–32	xxiii. 26–43	xix. 16–27
	Jesus expires on the cross. Portents accompany His death	437	xxvii. 45–56	xv. 33–41	xxiii. 44–49	xix. 28–30
	The burial	442	xxvii. 57–61	xv. 42–47	xxiii. 50–56	xix. 31–42
	The guard set at the sepulchre	444	xxvii. 62–66	—	—	—
Our Lord's Resurrection and Subsequent Appearances to His disciples.						
Sunday, Nisan 17 (April 9)	Visit of the women to the sepulchre. Mary Magdalene returns	444	xxviii. 1–4	xvi. 1–4	xxiv. 1–3	xx. 1, 2
	Vision of angels	445	xxviii. 5–7	xvi. 5–8	xxiv. 4–11	—
	John and Peter at the tomb	446	—	—	xxiv. 12	xx. 3–10
	Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene	446	—	xvi. 9–11	—	xx. 11–18
	He meets the other women returning to the city	447	xxviii. 8–10	—	—	—
	Report of the guards to the Sanhedrin	448	xxviii. 11–15		—	—

Date.	Event.	Page.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
A. D. 30 Sunday, Nisan 17 (April 9)	Jesus is seen by Peter, and by two disciples on the way to Emmaus (1 Cor. xv. 5)	448	—	xvi. 12, 13	xxiv. 13–35	—
	He appears to all the apostles but Thomas (1 Cor. xv. 5)	452	—	xvi. 14	xxiv. 36–49	xx. 19–23
Sunday, Nisan 24 (April 16)	He appears to all the apostles, and convinces Thomas	455	—	—	—	xx. 24–29
	The apostles go to Galilee. Jesus shows Himself to seven of them by the Sea of Tiberias	456	xxviii. 16	—	—	xxi. 1–24
	He meets five hundred on a mountain in Galilee (1 Cor. xv. 6)	461	xxviii. 16–20	xvi. 15–18	—	—
	He is seen by James (1 Cor. xv. 7)	461	—	—	—	—
Thursday, Iyar 26 (May 18)	He meets the apostles at Jerusalem, leads them out to Bethany, and ascends into Heaven (Acts i. 3–12)	462	—	xvi. 19, 20	xxiv. 50–53	—

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